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ELECTION 2004:

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

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Stolen Votes? You Be the Judge...

Port Townsend, Wash.

■ After your thought-provoking August 16/23 feature article by Ronnie Dugger, "How They Could Steal the Election This Time," I'm shocked and horrified that you haven't reported on the plethora of credible evidence that this election was indeed subjected to massive fraud (which included some of the methods Dugger outlined). There is only a small window of opportunity (until December 13, when the results of the election are "certified") to demand major legal action be taken to preserve some semblance of democracy in America. I should think *The Nation* would be screaming bloody murder, not joining the mainstream media's virtual lockout on this most critical story. DAVID MICHAEL

New York City

■ I'd just stepped out of my black helicopter to read that one of my favorite journalists, David Corn, had attacked my analysis of the vote in Ohio as the stuff of "grassy knoll conspiracy theorists" ["A Stolen Election?" November 29].

Oh, my! All because I wrote that the uncounted ballots in Ohio—more than a quarter-million designated "spoiled" or "provisional"—undoubtedly contain enough votes to overturn George Bush's "victory" margin of 136,000. Corn says, "Palast wrongly assumes that an overwhelming majority of these ballots contain votes for Kerry." Now why would I think such a thing? Maybe because the precinct-by-precinct analysis of "spoiled" votes (those that machines can't count) by Professor Mark Salling of Cleveland State University, the unchallengeable expert on Ohio voting demographics, concludes that "spoiled" punch cards in Ohio cities come "overwhelmingly" from African-American neighborhoods. The Republican secretary of state of Ohio does not disagree, by the way; he intends to fix the Jim Crow vote-counting problem in Ohio—sometime after the next inaugural ball.

The second group of uncounted ballots, "provisionals," were also generated substantially in African-American areas, the direct result of a Republican program to hunt down, challenge and suppress the votes cast in black-majority precincts.

What happened in Ohio is one-fiftieth of a nationwide phenomenon: the noncount of African-American votes, about a million of them marked as unreadable in a typical presidential race [see Greg Palast, "Vanishing Votes," May 17].

I will admit, David, I can't tell you exactly how each of those disenfranchised voters would have cast their ballots. Indeed, one Republican statistician claims these uncounted ballots are cast mostly by African-American supporters of George W. Bush.

Nevertheless, most of us conspiracy nuts on the grassy knoll hold to our wild belief that most black citizens whose ballots were spoiled or rejected tried to vote for the tall guy from Massachusetts. GREG PALAST

Oakland, Calif.

■ David Corn, while at least writing about vote fraud, something most of his commercial-media colleagues seem reluctant to do, has not done his homework. Had he read some of the items he mentions, he would notice that they are not "relying more on supposition than evidence." In regard to the exit polls, Dick Morris would not be a person I would look to for solid information. Instead, please look at the work of a University of Pennsylvania statistician as he explains the near-impossibility that the exit polls in three battleground states (and those only, not nationwide) could be so far off: www.truthout.org/unexplainedexitpoll.pdf.

Kathy Dopp's figures, which Corn says are refuted by professors at Cornell, Harvard and Stanford as having been "mostly in the conservative Florida Panhandle" are for almost the entire state, including counties in the far south and far east of Florida. Go to the evidence: www.uscountvotes.org. And you can verify where these counties are by going to www.verifiedvoting.org/verifier, where you will be able to look at each state, including Florida, and each US county to see which voted with which kind of machine.

The statement from Robert Parry that Corn quotes regarding "sophisticated CIA-style computer hacking" illustrates how naïve most of us are when it comes to the technical side of this matter. In fact, it was demonstrated on live television in September just how easy it is to get into the C drive of any of the central tallying computers that individual voting machines transmit to and simply change the totals—or reverse the names at the tops of columns from Kerry to Bush. And few people are saying this happened all over the United States—it only needed to happen in a few counties in a few swing states, remember? Like Florida and Ohio?

The fact that there is no paper trail is not an accident—there were at least three bills in both houses of Congress, which called simply for that, a paper trail—and the Republican leaders refused to let any of them out of committee, even though the original House bill (introduced in May 2003) had at one point more than 180 sponsors from both parties. The Bush Administration also refused to do what it is mandated to do by law, verify the code of all machines used for voting. Their argument was that the code is proprietary. Tell that to the government programmers and analysts who work on weapons systems, who every day have access to Microsoft, Lotus, etc. codes for their work. The government simply agrees not to divulge code from one company to another.

Finally, this statement from the associate dean at Yale Law School: "The mainstream press must immediately realize that this issue rises above partisanship and demands attention." www.law.yale.edu/outside/html/public_affairs/537/yls_article.htm. JUDITH FAUST

CORN REPLIES

Washington, DC

■ David Michael claims there is a "plethora of credible evidence" of fraud. But he does not cite specifics. In my articles, I have assessed the "evidence" that has zapped around the Internet and found some of it curious and some of it open to question or dismissal. The statistical proofs that have been popular among stolen-election proponents may raise eyebrows, but they do not make a solid case.

This is my argument with Greg Palast: In the article in question, for tompaine.com, Palast proclaims, "Kerry won" in Ohio, where the announced results had John Kerry down by 136,000 votes. Palast writes that if you count the 155,000 provisional ballots and "add in the [93,000] spoiled punch cards (easy to tally with the human eye in a recount)...the totals begin to match the exit polls; and, golly, you've got yourself a new president." He is wrong in his math and assumptions. Of the provisional ballots, Democrats in Ohio estimated that 80 to 90 percent would be valid. While these ballots could well break for Kerry, they would not yield enough of a net gain to erase Bush's lead. If Kerry won this group by a whopping 70-to-30 percent margin—a big if—he would net about 56,000 votes (assuming 90 percent of these ballots were deemed valid).

On to the spoiled punch cards—of which I know something. After the Florida fiasco of 2000, I examined 3,409 "spoiled" punch-card ballots in Miami-Dade County (which had not been included in the official count) and found that 59 percent had no marks for President and that only 233—with hanging, dangling

(Continued on Page 27)

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IN THIS ISSUE

2 **EXCHANGE**
STOLEN VOTES?
YOU BE THE JUDGE...
David Michael, Greg Palast, Judith Faust, David Corn

EDITORIALS & COMMENT

3 DNC MAKEOVER TIME

4 UKRAINE'S UNTOLD STORY
Jonathan Steele

6 DUTCH TOLERANCE TRIED
Maria Margaronis

28 TAKING LIBERTIES
Profiles in Legal Courage
David Cole

29 THE BUSH AIDS MACHINE
Esther Kaplan

30 DEFUNCT ECONOMISTS
William Greider

COLUMNS

6 DEADLINE POET
Tom (The Hammer) DeLay...
Calvin Trillin

8 BEAT THE DEVIL
Politicize the CIA?...
Alexander Cockburn

10 SUBJECT TO DEBATE
Stop Crying, Start Working
Katha Pollitt

ARTICLES

13 LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD: A FORUM
Theda Skocpol, Van Jones, Eric Foner, Susannah Heschel, Mary Gordon, Robert Coles, Danny Goldberg, Michael Lind, Richard Rorty, Danielle Allen, Beth Shulman, Tom Andrews, Noam Chomsky, Mary Robinson, Jorge Ramos, Steve Cobble & Joe Velasquez, Troy Duster, Jonathan Kozol, Blanche Wiesen Cook, Medea Benjamin, Bertha Lewis & Bob Master, Dan Carter, Juliet Schor

BOOKS & THE ARTS

31 PFAFF: The Bullet's Song: Romantic Violence and Utopia
Russell Jacoby

34 UPDIKE: Villages
Mark Lotto

36 DEPARLE: American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids, and a Nation's Drive to End Welfare
Jennifer Egan

40 FILMS
Notre Musique
Stuart Klawans

Cover by Gene Case & Stephen Kling/ Avenging Angels; illustration by R.O. Blechman; forum design by Steve Brower

EDITORIALS

DNC Makeover Time

Politics doesn't grant any long mourning periods. Democrats have to shake off the postelection blues—now—and begin agitating among themselves to create a very different party. The first challenge is the selection of a new chair to lead the Democratic National Committee. That contest is usually a ho-hum event, but this year is different. Democrats have sunk so low, the position can become an important starting point for restoration.

If you think the present party apparat did a great job in November, consider the following: How was it that, when 52 percent of Americans believed the war in Iraq was going badly, Democrats ended up with a candidate who couldn't make a convincing case to change the Commander in Chief? How was it that, when even Warren Buffett says US trade deficits have entered the danger zone, Democrats ended up with a candidate who could not hang misguided free-trade policies around Bush's neck? How was it that, even as Democrats won major breakthroughs in Western states, their presidential candidate lost the entire Rocky Mountain West? The answer is that Democrats in Washington do not have the answers. The party will never get back on track with a DC player at the helm, or with DC pollsters and consultants guiding its agenda or strategy. Dems must reconnect with the energy at the grassroots, holding councils in every county.

For that reason, we urge the DNC members to choose an outsider as their next chair—someone with the stature and personal confidence to get the party to engage in vigorous self-criticism and freewheeling bottom-up venting of insights and ideas. Howard Dean, who is interested in the job, would bring those qualities to it, but so might others—even someone who is not a "politician" but an authentic leader in other spheres.

In a TV interview recently, Illinois Senator-elect Barack Obama described his ideal candidate: "He's got to be an honest broker within the Democratic Party, to ask the right questions and to help generate some of the work that needs to be done on the policy and message front." In other words, someone who'll let in fresh air to reinvigorate the party's thinking and purpose. That challenge, Obama emphasizes, requires "hard intellectual work." It also needs a serious commitment to open-ended listening and learning among real-life citizens—not more polls, focus groups, policy papers. That means a sustained and very public dialogue with all kinds of Americans.

The party should rethink how it chooses its nominees. The national convention has been purposely emptied of substantive content. A self-confident party is not afraid of intramural debate and extended contests by serious challengers. Yet the Democratic establishment frontloaded the 2004 primary season to produce a quick resolution and shut down debate. Reform the primary calendar. Why are New Hampshire and Iowa given such overbearing influence on the outcome? Why not schedule a couple of industrial states—Ohio maybe—in a position of early influence? A more ambitious reform might construct a series of six or eight regional primaries designed to encourage a longer and more rational season that reflects the country's rich variety and encourages wide expression of our differences.

In the long run, substance matters far more than process. But for now, Democrats must think hard about what kind of processes might make them contenders again.

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COMMENT

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Ukraine's Untold Story

However Ukraine's crisis is resolved, it is clear that interference by Russia and the United States has been massive. Viktor Yanukovich, the current Prime Minister, was Moscow's favorite. Viktor Yushchenko, a former chairman of the Central Bank, was Washington's. In this long-range competition Moscow's partisanship was the more blatant and clumsy, highlighted by Vladimir Putin's two visits to Ukraine to appear alongside Yanukovich and publicly endorse him. Russian state-controlled TV, which can be seen in large areas of Ukraine, has also done what it can to influence voters with the same one-sided coverage it serves up in Russia's elections.

By contrast, US interference has been subtle and sophisticated, but the degree of American involvement appears to be more comprehensive than anything emanating from Moscow. And it has had minimal coverage in the largely partisan picture the Western media have painted of the Ukrainian crisis.

US funding has ranged from bankrolling opposition websites and radio stations to paying for the exit polls, which play a powerful role in mobilizing street protesters. It follows a template used four times in the past four years. The overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade in 2000 and of Eduard Shevardnadze in Georgia in 2003 were US successes. A similar effort to topple Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus in 2001 failed. So too did the campaign against Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe in 2002.

The pattern is that US diplomats orchestrate a campaign of financial help and marketing advice to civil groups, which is described as nonpartisan although in practice it is only put at the service of one side. Using consultants and poll experts, they explain how to choose catchy slogans and punchy logos and organize street comedy and rock concerts to create attractive grassroots campaigns to mobilize young people. Exit polls are a crucial tool. By getting their data on the table as soon as voting ends and being widely disseminated in the opposition media, they create an alleged truth against which the official results are measured. Any divergence of the official count is seen as proof that fraud is under way. Crowds pour into the streets, ready to block public buildings and engage in civil disobedience. This in turn puts the police and security forces under pressure, with the aim (successful in Belgrade and Tbilisi) of getting individual policemen and then whole units to mutiny against their commanders and switch sides. It can also have an intimidating effect on the Parliament and the courts, when they are asked to find compromises or adjudicate, as in Kiev.

America's first effort of this kind in modern times was in Asia—in 1986 in the Philippines when dictator Ferdinand Marcos tried to rig what turned out to be his last election. Senator Richard Lugar, who has been active as an observer in Ukraine, cut his foreign electoral teeth as head of the US observer team in Manila in 1986. When Marcos cheated, crowds came into the streets, eventually prompting two key army commanders to break ranks and join the protesters. One of them, Gen. Fidel Ramos, was later elected to the presidency.

So it was no surprise that after the cold war the United States would dust off the template and refine it for post-Communist

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conditions, taking advantage of the new democratic space and bringing it up to date with the use of imaginative marketing, the burgeoning of websites and exit polling. As my colleague Ian Traynor recently reported in the *Guardian*, the same actors have sometimes played in more than one production. Richard Miles, the US ambassador in Belgrade during the election protests in 2000, moved on to Georgia, where he coached Mikhail Saakashvili in how to topple Shevardnadze. Michael Kozak, the US ambassador in Belarus in 2001, was a veteran of US operations in Central America.

Under this template US pollsters and consultants are hired to organize focus groups and plot strategy. The Democratic Party's National Democratic Institute and the Republicans' International Republican Institute train and fund election monitors to go beyond simple poll-watching to do their own parallel vote counts. These have a mobilizing effect similar to the exit polls.

In short, intervening in foreign elections under the guise of an impartial interest in helping civil society has become the run-up to the postmodern coup d'état, the CIA-sponsored Third World uprising of cold war days adapted to post-Soviet conditions. Even if conducted impartially around the world, this heavy use of money in another country's elections (which would be illegal in the United States and most Western countries) raises serious questions. What makes it worse is its selectivity.

Like "humanitarian interventionism," which has been used more than once recently as a cover for going to war, "electoral interventionism" has become a tool in Washington's arsenal for overseas manipulation. The instruments of democracy are used selectively to topple particular rulers, and only when a US-friendly successor candidate or regime has been groomed. Countless elections in the post-Soviet space have been distorted by incumbents to a degree that probably reversed the result, usually by unfair use of state television and sometimes by direct ballot rigging. Boris Yeltsin's constitutional referendum in Russia in 1993 and his reelection in 1996 were early cases. Azerbaijan's presidential vote last year was also highly suspicious.

Yet after none of those polls did the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the main international observer body, or the US and other Western governments, make the furious noise they are producing today. The decision to protest appears to depend mainly on realpolitik and whether the challengers or the incumbent are considered more "pro-Western" or "pro-market." Or, as in Azerbaijan, Washington is happy with the anti-democratic policies maintained by the Aliyev dynasty because it is friendly to US oil companies.

In Ukraine, Yushchenko got the Western nod, and floods of money poured in to groups supporting him. This one-sided intervention is playing with fire. Not only is the country geographically and culturally divided—a recipe for partition or even civil war—it is also an important neighbor to Russia. Putin has been clumsy, but to accuse Russia of imperialism because it shows close interest in adjoining states and the Russian-speaking minorities who live there is a wild exaggeration.

Ukraine has been turned into a geostrategic matter not by Moscow but by Washington, which refuses to abandon its cold war policy of encircling Russia and seeking to pull every former Soviet republic into its orbit. The US campaign against Yanukovich accelerated this summer after outgoing President Leonid Kuchma reversed policy and said he no longer aspired to NATO membership for Ukraine. Yanukovich adopted that line.

Many Ukrainians certainly want a more democratic system. The vast bulk of the demonstrators in Kiev are undoubtedly genuine. Their enthusiasm and determination are palpable. But they do not reflect nationwide sentiment, and the support for Yanukovich in eastern Ukraine is also genuine. Nor are we watching a struggle between freedom and authoritarianism, as is romantically alleged. Yushchenko served as prime minister under Kuchma, and some of his backers are also linked to the brutal industrial clans who manipulated Ukraine's post-Soviet privatization. On some issues Yushchenko may be a better potential president than

NATION NOTES

The fourth annual winner of the Puffin/*Nation* Prize for 2004 is author and social critic Barbara Ehrenreich, a longtime contributor to this magazine, as well as to other periodicals on the left and center. The award is presented annually to an American who has challenged the status quo "through distinctive, courageous, imaginative, socially responsible work of significance." It carries a $100,000 stipend and is jointly administered by the Puffin Foundation Ltd. and The Nation Institute. The winner is chosen by an anonymous panel of judges.

Ehrenreich is the author of twelve books, most recently the bestselling *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. It has passed the 1 million mark in sales and is assigned reading at more than 600 colleges and at public high schools in Chicago, Madison and elsewhere.

In the tradition of writers like Jack London, Stephen Crane and George Orwell, Ehrenreich evoked the lives of the poor by first walking in their shoes—working in turn as a waitress, cleaning woman, nursing-home attendant and Wal-Mart clerk and experiencing how tough it is to "get by" on their pay. She writes all this in an engaging style that is mordant, witty, rueful and angry. In a profile of her in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, Scott Sherman said, "American journalism has a way of absorbing and neutralizing its mavericks and nonconformists, but Ehrenreich remains the person she always was: ferocious feminist, irascible idealist, stubborn socialist."

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

In two states that favored George W. Bush on November 2, voters also overwhelmingly approved ballot measures to raise the minimum wage by one dollar to $6.15 an hour. This shows, according to Peter Dreier and Kelly Candaele, that engaging in a vigorous fight to raise our meager minimum wage is not just the right thing to do, it may also be the politically astute thing for Democrats looking to get elected to do as well. Read about it at www.thenation.com.

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COMMENT

Yanukovich, but to suggest that he would provide a sea change in Ukrainian politics and economic management is naïve. Putin is not inherently against a democratic Ukraine, however authoritarian he is in his own country. What concerns him is instability, the threat of anti-Russian regimes on his borders and American mischief.

The European Union has been weak and divided, missing the chance to exert a strong European line in the face of US strategic meddling. It should give Ukraine the option of future membership rather than the feeble "action plan" of cooperation currently on offer. Adapting its legislation and practice to EU norms would set Ukraine on a surer path to irreversible reform than anything that either Yushchenko or Yanukovich would do. The EU should also make a public statement that it sees no value in NATO membership for Ukraine, and those EU members who belong to NATO will not support it. At a stroke this would calm Russia's legitimate fears and send a signal to Washington not to go on inflaming a purely European issue. JONATHAN STEELE

Jonathan Steele is the Guardian*'s senior foreign correspondent. This is an adaptation of an article that first appeared in the* Guardian.

CALVIN TRILLIN

THE PARTY OF MORAL VALUES DISPLAYS ITS OWN IN THE CASE OF MAJORITY LEADER TOM (THE HAMMER) DELAY

I.

In order never to convey
A tolerance for going astray,
Republicans, who now hold sway,
Wrote party rules designed to say
Indicted pols must give away
Their party posts, since soon they may
Have "felon" on their résumé.
This caused a problem for DeLay.

II.

Since Tom reads black and white as gray,
His funds are buried, like Pompeii.
He's bludgeoned lobbyists to pay
For just the sort of entree they
Must have to bend the laws their way.
He's more than earned that sobriquet.
His colleagues fear, to their dismay,
He'll be indicted any day.

Dutch Tolerance Tried

"We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant." So said the philosopher Karl Popper near the end of World War II. The recent events in the Netherlands—traditionally seen as Europe's most open society—have exposed the difficulties of applying this paradox in twenty-first-century Europe, where competing forms of intolerance are feeding one another, to disastrous effect.

In some ways the murder of columnist and filmmaker Theo van Gogh was a very Dutch affair. Victim and assassin crossed paths by bicycle in Amsterdam, where the Dutch policy of *gedogen* (roughly translated as benign neglect, or looking down your nose while turning a blind eye) has allowed a relaxed, self-regulating street culture to flourish. Van Gogh used free speech as a vehicle for racism and the Dutch tradition of "killing taboos" to boost his own career. He routinely referred to Muslims as "goatfuckers"; he called Jews "fornicating yellow stars in a gas chamber"; and wrote that a Jewish woman historian who criticized him "gets wet dreams about being fucked by Dr. Mengele." He was no outsider artist but a friend of politicians, court jester to a certain circle of the Dutch elite. Pim Fortuyn, the charismatic anti-immigrant leader assassinated two years ago by an animal-rights fanatic, wanted van Gogh on his party's ticket. Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Gerrit Zalm, now leading the call for a war on radical Islam, played a role in one of his films. Of course (it should go without saying), he didn't deserve to die.

This poster boy for free expression found a collaborator in Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an ex-Muslim who came to the Netherlands twelve years ago as an asylum-seeker from Somalia, where she had suffered genital mutilation and faced forced marriage. Her well-researched, outspoken opposition to such practices in the Netherlands won her a place in Parliament—first for the Labor Party and then for Zalm's free-market VVD party, which demands the deportation of thousands of refugees, some possibly to face the tortures she has fled. *Submission*, the film she made with van Gogh that so angered his assassin, illustrates the intimate testimony of abused Muslim women with soft-porn imagery. Some Dutch Muslim women beaten by their husbands reacted angrily when it was shown on television, saying it made a travesty of their suffering. Hirsi Ali has also received death threats; she has been in hiding since van Gogh's murder.

The journey of van Gogh's accused killer, Mohammed Bouyeri, is almost a mirror image of Hirsi Ali's. Born in the Netherlands to a quiet, moderate Moroccan family, he went to an academic high school and worked as a youth counselor at a community center. After his mother's early death he got into petty crime and was seduced by radical Islam at a local mosque; according to the Dutch police he fell in with young men who were under surveillance as suspected terrorists, possibly linked to the Casablanca bombers. The letter he pinned with his knife to van Gogh's half-beheaded body mingled Islamic formulas with the hippest Dutch street slang. It is Bouyeri's Dutchness that has so deeply disconcerted the security

(Continued on Page 28)

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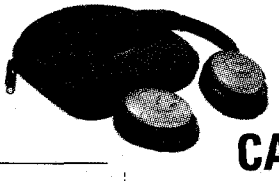

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Politicize the CIA? You've Got to Be Kidding!

No alien penetration or treachery of double agents has ever done nearly as much damage to the CIA as the infighting consequent upon the arrival of each new director, charged by his White House master with cleaning house and settling accounts with the bad guys installed by the previous White House incumbent.

Bush's new director, former Republican Florida Representative Porter Goss, and his team of enforcers are now rampaging through the corridors of CIA HQ at Langley. Goss was once an undercover CIA officer, so there's probably a personal edge to his mission of revenge, as he strikes back at the dolts who nixed his expense accounts or poured scorn on his heroic endeavors in the field.

But Goss's most pressing task is to exact retribution for the anti–White House stories emanating from the CIA in the months before the election. Goss and his hit team have acted swiftly. In early November the CIA's number 2, John McLaughlin, resigned, followed days later by the top man on the clandestine side and his deputy. And, no surprise, into retirement goes "Anonymous," Michael Scheuer, leader of the CIA unit hunting Osama bin Laden. I'm with Goss on that one. Scheuer probably spent most of each day hunting down his next book advance and kibitzing about royalties from *Imperial Hubris* with his true "controls" at Brassey's Inc., owned by shadowy Books International.

So Goss will exact vengeance, spill blood, leak to favored journalists and deliver Bush daily intelligence briefings tailored to meet the expectations of his patron.

Of course there's a portentous uproar and wringing of pious hands as the cry goes up that the abilities of the agency to collect and analyze useful intelligence are being compromised by "unparalleled" political partisanship. "We need a director," cries Jay Rockefeller, ranking Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, "that is not only knowledgeable and capable, but unquestionably independent."

There's nothing new in all this. Permit me to take you on a brisk tour of CIA directors. Before Goss we had George Tenet, a politically agile former Congressional staffer so eager to please Bush that he uttered the imperishable words "slam dunk" about the supposed ease of making a case for Saddam's WMD.

Tenet, whose political agility is advertised in the fact that he was one of the longer-serving DCIs, supplanted John Deutch, an MIT prof who divided his brief sojourn as director between downloads of the agency's darkest secrets onto his personal laptop, business ventures with a revolving doorman from DoD, William Perry, and excursions to attend town meetings in Los Angeles, claiming to black audiences that the CIA had no role in funneling cocaine into the nation's ghettos. Among the few secret files Deutch apparently failed to download onto his laptop were materials later excavated by the CIA's own inspector general, Fred Hitz, establishing CIA complicity in the cocaine trade.

Deutch's predecessor was Jim Woolsey, unusual for someone in the Clinton-Gore milieu in having no conspicuous record of marijuana consumption, hence a security clearance. Clinton and Gore mostly liked Woolsey for political reasons, because he had street cred with the neocons (who used to sail under the flag of "Jackson Democrats"). Woolsey later became a prime lobbyist for attacking Iraq.

DCI before Woolsey was Robert Gates, in trouble for lying to Congress; before him was William Webster, brought in as an air freshener after William Casey, one of the most consummate scoundrels ever to run any government agency in the entire history of the United States. Casey was Reagan's campaign bagman, then put in as CIA chief with the prime function of misrepresenting the threat posed by the Soviet Union and, nearer at hand, Nicaragua.

Casey dislodged Jimmy Carter's man, Adm. Stansfield Turner, a relatively honest fellow. Turner, roasted for firing many in the CIA "old guard" of that era, took over from Bush Sr., who, like JFK, sanctioned a Murder Inc. in the Caribbean, and who wilted under pressure from the Jackson Democrats, *a k a* the Military Industrial Complex. It was Bush who appointed the notorious "Team B" to contradict previous in-house CIA analyses suggesting the Soviet threat was not as fearsome as that depicted on the cartoon (*a k a* editorial) page of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Bush's predecessor as DCI was William Colby, a CIA career man mostly famous for running the Phoenix assassination program in Vietnam and testifying with undue frankness in the Church Congressional hearings into the CIA. In retirement Colby continued his career as a conspiracy buff, probing the suicide of Clinton's counsel Vince Foster for his newsletter. Colby finally stepped into his canoe on Maryland's eastern shore after a dinner of clams and white wine and turned up drowned a few days later.

Colby replaced James Schlesinger, who ran the agency for a few months in the midst of the Watergate scandal. Ray McGovern, a twenty-seven-year career analyst with the CIA, now retired, remembers how he and his agency colleagues were taken aback when Schlesinger announced on arrival, "I am here to see that you guys don't screw Richard Nixon!" To underscore his point, McGovern recalls, Schlesinger "told us he would be reporting directly to White House political adviser Bob Haldeman and not to National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger."

We'll stop with Schlesinger, but you get the idea. There's nothing new about the "political" appointment of Porter Goss, who at least has the agreeable distinction of owning an organic farm in Virginia, where tiny donkeys supervise hairy sheep from Central Asia and chickens lay green eggs, thus reduplicating the agency's most expensive op ever, the Afghan caper, wherein the CIA supervised the mujahedeen, costing $3.5 billion and launching Osama bin Laden on his chosen path.

Most intelligence is worthless, with the scant truthful stuff rapidly deep-sixed. Whatever makes its way onto the desks of Presidents or Congressional overseers is 100 percent "political." Anyone who wants to find out what's happening in the world would be better advised to ask a taxi driver. ■

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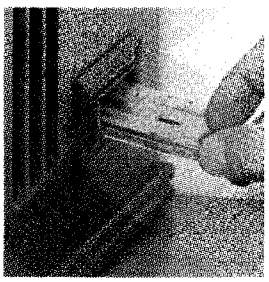

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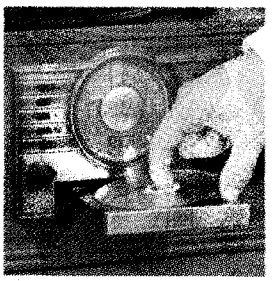

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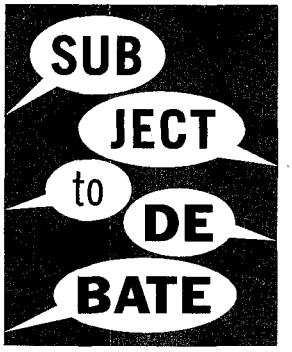
KATHA POLLITT

Stop Crying, Start Working



How long did it take Republicans to write their thank-you note to the Christian right? About five minutes. On November 21, Congress passed a $388 billion spending bill that permits any health provider—not just doctors and nurses, who can already opt out in forty-five states, but health insurers, HMOs, public or private hospitals, clinics, pharmacists—to refuse to be involved in abortion, up to and including informing a woman where to get one. Your employer can now deny you abortion coverage! Coming up soon: the Child Custody Protection Act, which would make it illegal for anyone but a parent or guardian to take an underage girl across state lines for an abortion, thus making parental notification and consent laws impossible to get around; the grotesque Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, which would require doctors to offer women aborting after twenty weeks pain medication for their fetuses; the Post-Abortion Depression Research and Care Act; and lots more. Measures like these make abortion harder to get: Arrangements take longer, travel becomes more burdensome, the clinic date gets pushed later and the cost goes up—from around $350 for a first-trimester procedure to $1,000 or more after twelve weeks.

Most readers know this already, but did you know there's something you can do? If you've been racking your brains for an activist project to replace obsessively monitoring the Electoral College Vote Predictor, here is one that could make a real difference as former Texas Air National Guard pilot George W. Bush swoops us into the wild blue fundamentalist yonder: Get involved with your local abortion fund. If none exists in your area—there are 102 around the country—start one yourself.

Abortion funds help low-income women obtain a crucial medical service, but they also help clinics fulfill their mission of egalitarian feminist healthcare. Barbara Ehrenreich recently reminded *Nation* readers of the network of storefront services the left created in the 1960s and '70s—neighborhood clinics, legal centers, preschools, coffeehouses near military bases. The country is dotted with abortion clinics—Aradia Women's Health Clinic in Seattle, Red River Women's Clinic in Fargo, the Concord Feminist Health Center in New Hampshire—that follow that model, reaching into the community and connecting the services they provide with the political organizing that keeps those services available.

To get you started here's a handy guide from Jennifer Baumgardner, the author with Amy Richards of *Grassroots: A Field Guide to Feminist Activism* (forthcoming January 2005) and longtime supporter of the New York Abortion Access Fund:

1) Assess Need: The first thing you should do is call your own local clinic, identify yourself as a pro-choice activist, and ask whether they need a fund. Even if there is a fund in place, it is highly unlikely that a clinic would not have a need for money. Patients show up all the time further along in their pregnancy than they thought, which requires more money. The New York City clinic that I work with has to raise around $1,500 in additional funds each week so that women can get their procedures. Their biggest single source of money is the New York Abortion Access Fund, which grants around $20,000 annually. Fargo, ND has a small local fund but it "could definitely use some big donations or people who want to organize fundraisers," says Tammi Kromenaker, director of Red River Women's Clinic, the only clinic in the state. At present, the clinic gets about $5,000 from the local fund and ends up asking patients to turn to the Hersey Fund in neighboring Minnesota.

2) Find Partners: Whether you're creating a fund from scratch or organizing fundraisers for one that already exists, you are going to need help. Enlist friends, call the women's center at a local university, contact the local chapter of NOW, put up flyers in coffee shops ("Interested in abortion rights? We're going to start a fund—come to X place at Y time!").

3) Formalize: Contact the National Network of Abortion Funds (www.nnaf.org). Email info@nnaf.org or call (413) 559-5645 and ask for their three-ring notebook called Building an Abortion Fund. It details everything from how to run your organization to how to get tax-exempt status. Don't worry if you haven't done this sort of thing before. "The women and men who start these funds are all ages and range from Ivy League students to a social worker in a farm community," says Shawn Towey of NNAF.

4) Raise the Dough: There are infinite creative ways to raise money—from grant-writing to art auctions—but start with letters and events. Letters can end up being formalized into a direct-mail campaign in which you buy a mailing list and have a letter with a brochure and return envelope for donations (which NYAAF did using a fundraising letter by Katha—it worked!). Start personal, though, by writing to friends, relatives and anyone else in your address book you think might be interested in supporting you or your cause. I wrote a heartfelt letter to pro-choice friends of my mother's, hoping they wouldn't be offended by my plea for money, and made $1,000 for an abortion documentary. For an event, you will use that same circle of donors, but invite them to your house—or that of a fabulous friend—for wine and cheese. About an hour into it, give a brief talk about the fund. Have a basket at the door and ask for $20 (or more) from each mini-philanthropist.

5) Repeat step 4 as necessary.

While you are mulling over Jennifer's advice, get in practice by making a donation to the Emma Goldman Clinic in Iowa City. Last year the clinic, which charges on a sliding scale in order to make quality reproductive healthcare available to all, was able to subsidize $230,000 worth of patient services. This year, it's having trouble meeting that goal, because it incurred heavy legal expenses to get an injunction against an antiabortion extremist who threatened murder and because it faces a big insurance rise (reason: It's an abortion clinic). To make a donation, go to www.emmagoldman.com or call (800) 848-7684. You'll be helping women and supporting feminist activism—and in a red state, too. ■

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ARTICLES

The defeat of John Kerry, combined with the Republican advances in the House and Senate, has unleashed waves of dismay and perplexity within liberal and progressive circles. What happened? Why did so many voters embrace a President whose Iraq policy was paved with lies and deceptions, who has shown contempt for science, the rule of law and many of the principles of the Enlightenment, and whose economic policies favor the rich at the expense of the vast majority of Americans? What lessons do we draw from Kerry's failure to win over the electorate in spite of the Bush Administration's conspicuous failures? Are the Democrats crippled, or merely wounded, and is the party really out of touch with "mainstream" values? Finally, what should the priorities of the progressive movement be in this era of Republican dominance, and what is the best formula for future electoral success? The Nation *asked some of the country's leading political activists and intellectuals for their thoughts on one or more of these questions. Their brief essays follow.*

—The Editors

Theda Skocpol

DEMOCRATS LOST BADLY IN 2004, especially in the Senate, but they should not spend a huge amount of time on recriminations. The presidential race was quite close, and nothing to be ashamed about. Sitting Presidents are hard to unseat in wartime, and President Bush clearly succeeded in using the post-9/11 worries about security to his advantage all across the nation and in many voter segments (especially among women). Ironically, the very fact that Bush has made a mess of Iraq probably helped him, because it kept security and war-related issues at the forefront of public discussion throughout the campaign. Democrats, moreover, never succeeded in offering a clear vision of the future at home or abroad.

Now Democrats are a minority party, with no center of national leadership. They need to get some visible spokespersons in place quickly, and begin a continuing campaign of organization and argument around carefully selected policy battles. The Republicans are going to use their across-the-board government powers very aggressively. There will be too many things to fight, and the Democrats should pick one big battle at a time to use as a vehicle for framing a countervision of national well-being and attacking Republican extremism. I do not think the battles should be over Iraq. That will play out as it will, probably badly, and Bush and the Republicans should be left holding the bag without a lot of Democratic input along the way.

In domestic politics, I worry that the Democrats will wander off into a series of battles over Supreme Court appointments focused on worries about what might happen, some day, with *Roe v. Wade* and abortion rights. That is not the way to go to inspire and build a national majority. Instead, Democrats should start right now to focus on aggressive defense of the Social Security system. They should not wait for specific policy proposals from Republicans—as we learned in the Medicare prescription drug battle, those specifics will be hidden until the last minute—but should paint a picture of Republican plans and attack it today, tomorrow, the next day, unremittingly. There should be a coordinated campaign among officeholders and Democratic-leaning groups.

Paint Republican privatization plans not as an attack on the elderly alone, but as an attack on all working Americans. "They are going to take the taxes everyone has contributed for years and use them to pay fees for Wall Street brokers." "They are going to let richer people opt out of paying their fair share into Social Security—and make the system go broke very soon." "They are going to break the promises long ago made to all of us who contribute to Social Security, take away the benefits we have built for our own retirement, as well as to take care of our parents and grandparents." "Social Security works as a savings system for all of us together. We save efficiently that way. It leaves each of us free to save more if we can. But no one should have to give up their promised benefits so Republicans can pay off their rich friends." Etc. Use rhetoric that is both hard-hitting and invokes a countervision of the benefits of social cooperation. Stop worrying about policy details—or engaging in expert policy-speak, or trying to be precisely "fair" to the opposition. Arouse a sense of profound threat based on a picture of what Republicans almost certainly will have to do in any privatization move.

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Democrats, in short, need to use the politics of defense to their benefit over the next two years. Seize the opportunity to reframe debate and demonize Republican radicals, especially on issues that have both bread-and-butter and moral implications for ordinary working Americans, as Social Security does. We should worry less about candidates for elections in 2006 or 2008 (stop talking about Hillary!) and choose our battles now to speak in vivid, morally powerful terms to potential majorities of American working people.

Theda Skocpol teaches political science at Harvard University. Her recent books include The Missing Middle: Working Families and the Future of American Social Policy *(Norton) and* Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life *(Oklahoma).*

Van Jones

THE DEMOCRATS TODAY ARE LIKE BRIGHT KIDS, failing out of school. They're smart. They're studious. But they just can't figure out how to pass the exams. Now they are furious with those "stupid" red-state graders. But they still can't graduate without red-state approval. What to do?

Well, the analogy itself holds some answers. On exam day (and election day), one excels when she knows what competence the teacher is actually measuring. Democrats think their IQs are being tested. But voters today are flunking them, in part, based on their low EQs.

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the intelligence of the heart. People with high IQs understand data. But people with high EQs understand people. They know how to connect and empathize; how to set people at ease; how to touch their hearts; how to make folks laugh and cry.

Left-wing intellectuals often look down on those whose intelligence is in the emotional domain. We cherish careful analysis—not down-home yarns and "charisma." We sniff at the "charmers." We fear the "demagogues." We want our politics to be above all that.

But the verdict's in: EQ trumps IQ in big elections—hands down. Think Gray Davis versus Arnold Schwarzenegger. Or Alan Keyes versus Barack Obama. All the candidates had IQ smarts (yes, including Arnold). But the winners were titans of EQ. And the losers were EQ midgets.

In 2004 Kerry had more policy smarts. But Bush had more people smarts. He ran the more emotionally resonant campaign—speaking clearly, simply and passionately. And he won.

Republicans have mastered this art—but only recently. EQ genius Bill Clinton beat Bob Dole and outlasted Newt Gingrich. It was almost no contest, since both of Clinton's GOP foes were emotionally tone-deaf. Clinton's EQ-based spanking forced the Republicans to speak in the more EQ-savvy language of "compassionate conservatism." The rest is history.

The bottom line: Emotional intelligence matters—a lot. Voters don't trust pure brainiacs. Their brainiest bosses, teachers and HMO doctors were often their worst. They want to feel comfortable with the human being they are placing in power. Even among Democrats, Kerry failed to connect at a human level. That cost him—and all of us.

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Progressives certainly need more infrastructure. But voters don't vote for think tanks, networks or websites. They vote for individual candidates. And we need to invest in those who can lead with their hearts, as well as their heads.

Van Jones is executive director of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights in Oakland, California.

Eric Foner

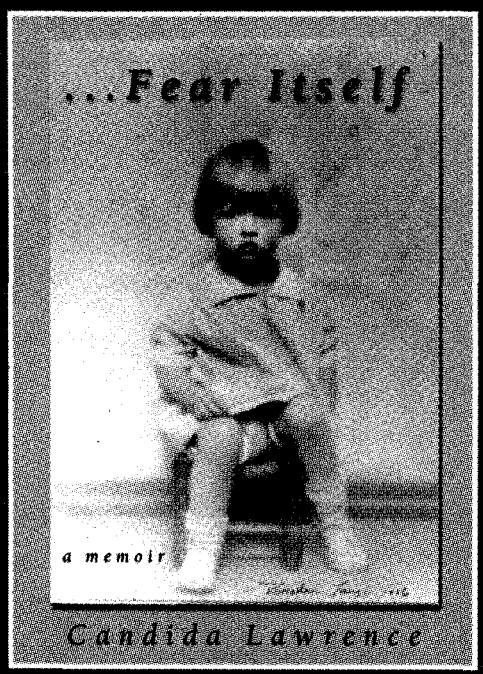
RARELY HAS A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION produced such widespread despair on the left. By any objective standard, George W. Bush has been among the worst Presidents in American history. One of the main purposes of elections in a democracy is to act as a check on those in power by confronting them with the possibility of being removed from office. If Bush can be re-elected after having alienated virtually the entire world, brought the country into war on false pretenses and mortgaged the nation's future to provide economic benefits to the rich, what incentive will other Presidents have to act more reasonably?

Nonetheless, the vote was not a mandate for a conservative agenda. A majority of 51 percent and a margin of three points in the popular vote do not constitute a landslide, no matter what Karl Rove and the spin doctors insist. Indeed, the most striking thing about the result is how it resembled that of 2000. All but three states voted the same way they did the last time around. The nation remains closely divided.

Progressives must not succumb to hopelessness. The left must do what it has always done in American history—what Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony and Eugene Debs did: stake out a clear position in favor of social and economic justice, at home and abroad, and articulate it as clearly and forcefully as possible. We must also work to strengthen institutions that provide the social basis for progressive politics. The right has its evangelical churches, often the only remaining centers of civil society in a decentered world of shopping malls and galloping subdivisions. The left traditionally had unions, and their decline is intimately related to Democratic defeat. Even without strong unions, Kerry did best among voters with lower incomes. Nothing would revive progressive politics more effectively than a reinvigoration of American unions. This may not be the road to immediate electoral success. But when Democrats return to power, as they surely will one day, it is essential that there be a progressive agenda in place to help shape public policies.

We must not join the bandwagon proclaiming that "moral values" were the key to this election. In exit polls, the "moral values" category was a grab-bag indicating everything from hostility to abortion rights to the desire for a leader who says what he means and apparently means what he says. Denigrating religious conviction per se is hardly the path to follow. But progressives must not seek victory by appealing to intolerance and unreason and rejecting the traditions of the Enlightenment that we alone seem to embrace today. We should take comfort from the fact that our values—social justice, respect for international law, religious and moral tolerance—are shared by the rest of the industrialized world. One of these days, the United States will catch up.

FEAR ITSELF
by Candida Lawrence



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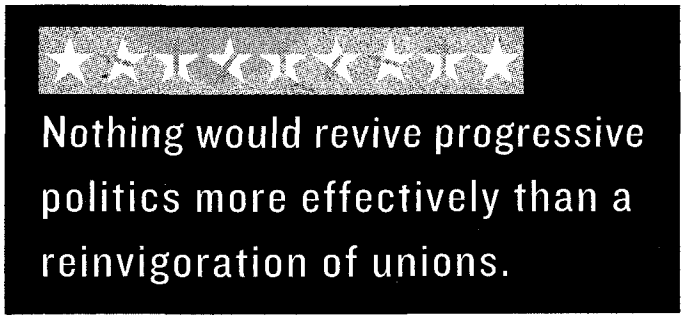
I suspect that the attacks of September 11 and the sense of being engaged in a worldwide "war on terror" contributed substantially to Bush's victory. Generally speaking, Americans have not changed Presidents in the midst of a war. The Bush campaign consistently and successfully appealed to fear, with continuous warnings of imminent and future attacks. Land of the free? Perhaps. Home of the brave? Not anymore.

Eric Foner is DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University.

Susannah Heschel

DEMOCRATS ARE BEING ADVISED to respond to their election losses by enhancing their rhetoric of religion. What we need to do instead is revive the prophetic tradition, especially its critique of religion.

Major movements of social advancement in this country have spoken in the name of the prophets, not in the name of churches or religion. Martin Luther King Jr., for example, spoke as a prophet, not a priest or theologian, and in fact was regarded with suspicion by many religious leaders, including in the black church. "Let justice roll down like water, and righteouness as a mighty stream," the anthem of the civil rights movement, were the words of Amos (5:24). Central to the prophetic tradition is its critique of religious rituals, beliefs and those who enforce them. In words applicable to today, Jeremiah declares, "An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?" (Jeremiah 5:30–31)



Rather than debate theological interpretations, the prophets denounce hypocrisy and insist on justice as the tool of God and the manifestation of God. Neither religious ritual nor belief holds meaning for the prophets as ends in themselves; what God wants, Amos insists, is not worship but an end to war crimes and exploitation in the marketplace. For the prophets, justice is the means of redemption, including our redemption of God from the constraints of religion, human mendacity and complacency in the face of evil. They also are adamant that evil is never the climax of history.

Democrats have to challenge the legitimacy of the Christian right in the name of the prophets. We have to unmask the unholy passions that inspire the apocalyptic zeal of so many Christians, Muslims and Jews: the *ressentiment* that has been fostered by the right wing since the days of Governor George Wallace, and the loneliness that makes apocalyptic fantasies so appealing. Today, the prophets would once again see truth and justice shackled with chains, enslaved by selfishness and the lust for power and empire.

We need a new civil rights movement, a mobilization against the Bush regime, against its nascent totalitarianism, with marches on Washington that will stir the dormant American conscience. A movement can become powerful in America if it speaks in the voice of the prophets, insisting on our duty as citizens to resist a government that is subverting justice with its deadly policies.

In the Bible God asks, "Who will speak for me, who will remember the covenant of peace and compassion?" We must abandon despair and find the inner resources to respond with the prophet Isaiah: "Here I am, send me" (6:8).

Susannah Heschel is professor of Jewish studies at Dartmouth College and co-chair of the Tikkun Community.

Mary Gordon

I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE CAN DO to regain our lost ground, but I think the key is fear. Fear of the other, broadly defined. I sometimes think the entire species is suffering post-traumatic shock; as a species, we have had to absorb an enormous amount of change in a very short time. Perhaps the most dramatic change in the past thirty years is the mainstreaming of the idea—even only as an idea, I wouldn't suggest it's come to practice—that men and women are equal. This is quite radical, and rather new in the history of the species.

What all fundamentalists share is a determination to repress the freedoms and rights of women. When this is coupled with a sexual anxiety about homosexuals—who after all take the place of women in the imagination, or assert that the definition of the female is more malleable than had formerly been thought—you get a potent substance that feeds the toxin of anxiety. This is what we mean by culture wars.

On top of that: The notion that people we once thought of as our inferiors have us by the throat—because we are dependent upon them for oil and because they can drive planes into our buildings—has shaken many people to their roots. This fear freezes their minds from flexible and imaginative thinking and freezes religious postures into crippling and perverse versions of what they might be.

We should remember that the chances of unseating a President in wartime were small and that we did much better than we might have predicted. What upsets me more: a Democratic Senate minority leader who is antichoice.

Mary Gordon will be publishing a novel, Pearl *(Pantheon), in January. She teaches at Barnard College in New York.*

Robert Coles

I SPEND A GOOD DEAL OF MY WORKING LIFE talking with ordinary working people in various parts of this country. Well before election day, I heard from factory workers, office workers, truckers, social workers, nurses, doctors and lawyers about their dilemmas on voting—most of them, like me, registered Democrats, yet not sure they wanted to vote the Kerry-Edwards ticket.

Let this remark by a woman, a nurse who works in a North Carolina hospital emergency ward (her husband is a truck driver), be an answer to the question of "what just happened," and maybe to some other questions posed:

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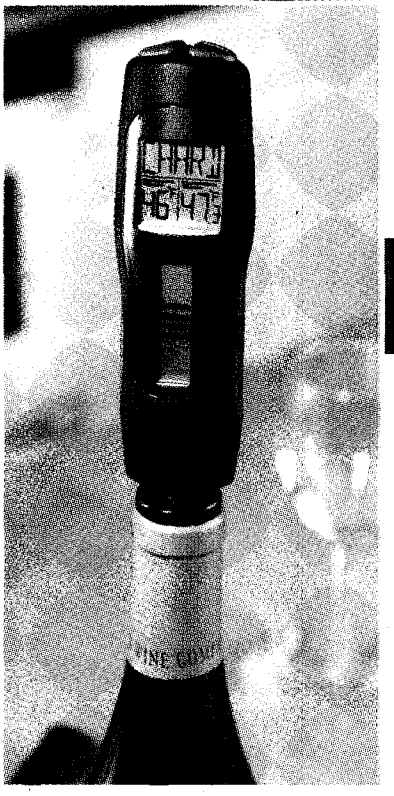

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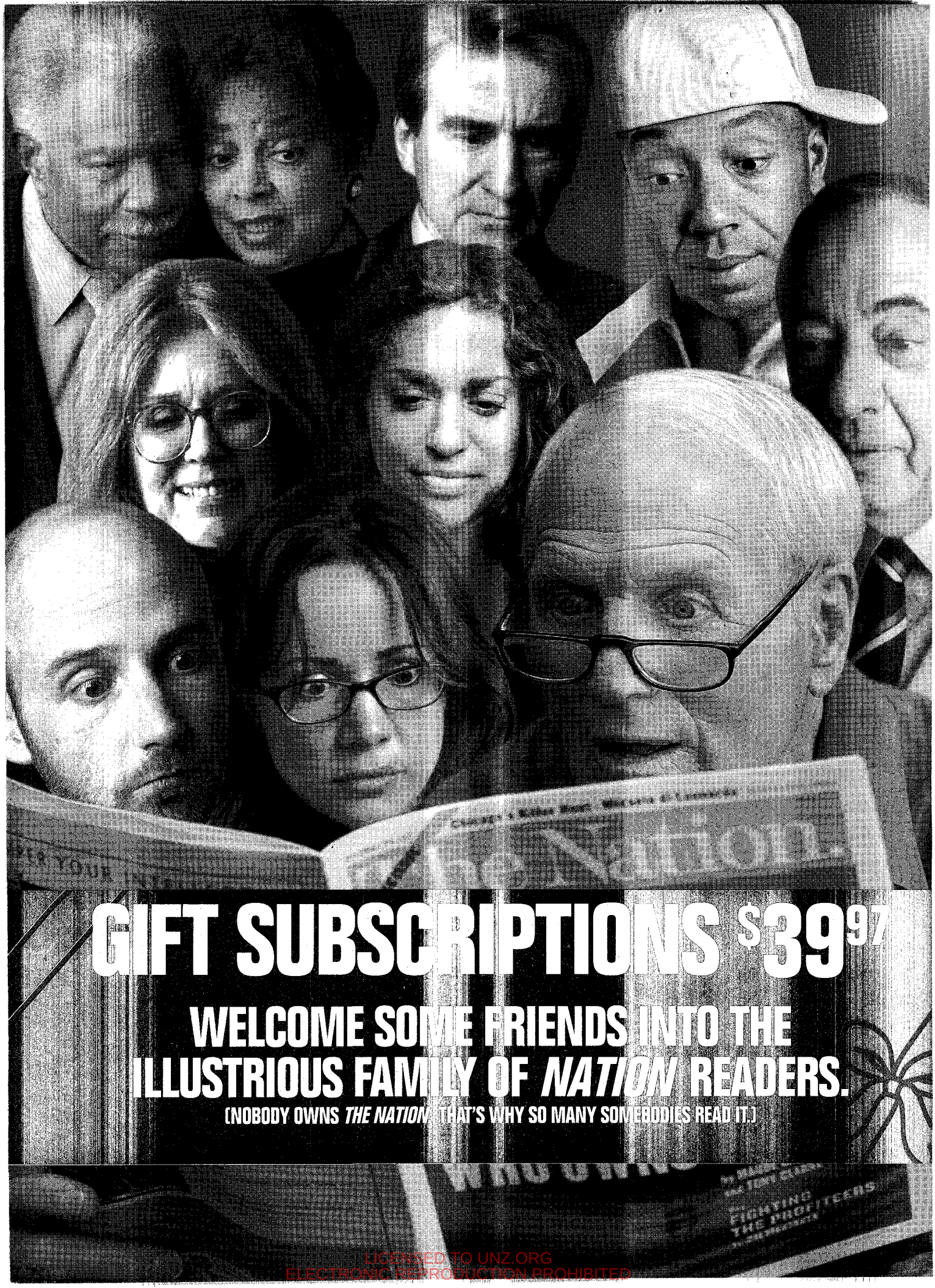
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I went to vote and I wasn't sure I'd end up deciding—that's unusual for me; usually I know in advance. I wanted to vote for the Democratic side, but it was hard for me to go along with it. Kerry, he's stiff, and he puts you off (me anyway). I don't like some of the things his wife said—I couldn't imagine her being our nation's First Lady without a shudder. Edwards—he's a ham—lawyer, feeding off the trouble people get themselves into.

The Democrat Party is different than it used to be; it's become highfalutin, my daddy says. (Truman was his favorite President—"no airs about him.") President Bush, you could sit in a regular place and have a beer with him, and like the time spent—you'd like him and like his wife a whole lot. (You talk about having a drink—with the Kerrys, they'd be ordering some fancy stuff I've never heard of, in some ritzy place.) The Bush family, they're high up, but they're our kind of people. The Democrats, they're "cross-towners"—I just don't get them, what they believe and want, other than to win.

Sure, Bush and Cheney want to win, too [I had observed]; but somehow you get more connected to them, what they believe, who they really are (what they'd go to bat for, win or lose, heart, mind and soul). I guess that was my opinion—all these thoughts running across my head, until I stopped them and did my voting!

Robert Coles is the James Agee Professor of Social Ethics at Harvard University.

Danny Goldberg

THERE WERE TWO CAMPAIGNS that supported John Kerry in 2004, the official campaign and a cluster of unofficial progressive campaigns.

The official campaign gave us a candidate who said he would still have voted for the war resolution, who posed for photographers as a windsurfer and a goose hunter. It made TV spots less memorable than Bush's. Although Kerry would have made a fine President, he was unable to convey who he was. When *Time* magazine asked voters which candidate was good at "sticking to his positions," 84 percent said "yes" about Bush and only 37 percent said "yes" about Kerry.

The unofficial campaigns, while loyal to Kerry, were driven by passion on issues, the war, civil liberties, the environment, and economic justice. They focused particularly on younger voters. The best description of the result is posted on the Music for America website (www.musicforamerica.org/node/view/67061), where you can see what the electoral map would look like if people under 30 had determined the election. Kerry would have won 375 electoral votes. The newly blue states would have included not only Florida and Ohio but also Virginia, West Virginia, Nevada, Missouri, Arkansas, North Carolina and Mississippi!

Kerry himself was no Goldwater, either in the magnitude of his loss or in the passion he inspired. But the unofficial campaigns gave America, for the first time in a quarter-century, an organized, impassioned progressive voice. *The Nation* finally has institutional allies like MoveOn.org, Air America, numerous new think tanks and organizations large and small. Finally there is a pulse. It is now our job to build on what was accomplished, first by protecting it against inane negativity by official Democratic political losers, and more importantly by doing the painstaking work of building a political future, as conservatives have done since the 1960s.

The most effective line from George Bush's stump speech was, "Even when you disagree with me, at least you know what I believe and where I stand." As George Lakoff has written, we need a progressive philosophy expressed in relationship to core moral beliefs. We also need candidates who understand that part of the job description for political leadership is fluency in mass American cultural language, a language in which, for example, the word "cowboy" is a compliment, not an insult.

Danny Goldberg is the author of Dispatches From the Culture Wars: How the Left Lost Teen Spirit *(Miramax Books, paperback to be published in the spring by Akashic Books).*

Michael Lind

IN AN ERA IN WHICH MOST US POPULATION GROWTH is occurring in the South, West and heartland, American liberalism is defined by people in the Northeast. At a time when rising tuitions are pricing many working-class Americans out of a college education, the upscale campus is becoming the base of American progressivism. In a country in which most working-class Americans drive cars and own homes in the suburbs, the left fetishizes urban apartments and mass transit and sneers at "sprawl." In an economy in which most workers are in the service sector, much of the left is obsessed with manufacturing jobs. In a society in which Latinos have surpassed blacks as the largest minority and in which racial intermixture is increasing, the left continues to treat race as a matter of zero-sum multiculturalism and white-bashing. In a culture in which the media industry makes money by pushing sex and violence, the left treats the normalization of profanity and obscenity as though it were somehow progressive, making culture heroes of Lenny Bruce and Larry Flynt. At a time when the religious right wants to shut down whole areas of scientific research, many on the left share a Luddite opposition to biotech. In an age in which billions would starve if not for the use of artificial fertilizers in capital-intensive agriculture, the left blathers on about small-scale organic farming. In a century in which the dire need for energy for poor people in the global South can only be realistically met by coal, oil and perhaps nuclear energy, liberals fantasize about wind farms and solar panels. And in a world in which the greatest threat to civilization is the religious right of the Muslim countries, much of the left persists in treating the United States as an evil empire and American patriotism as a variant of fascism.

American progressivism, in its present form, is as obsolete in the twenty-first century as the agrarian populists were in the twentieth. If you can't adapt to the times, good intentions will get you nowhere. Ask the shade of William Jennings Bryan.

Michael Lind, the Whitehead Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation, is the author of Made in Texas: George W. Bush and the Southern Takeover of American Politics *(Basic).*

Richard Rorty

MOST AMERICANS FIND IT INTOLERABLE to think that our soldiers were sent abroad to die for no sufficient reason. They are still unwilling to admit that those who fell in Vietnam lost their lives

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in vain. So half the electorate managed to keep on believing both that Saddam Hussein was preparing to use weapons of mass destruction and that he was somehow linked to 9/11. They did so because, in their minds, to abandon those beliefs would be to withdraw support from our troops. So Senator Kerry did himself little good with the voters by demonstrating that President Bush had deceived the nation in order to invade Iraq. But he was boxed in. He could not ignore the issue without alienating his own base, and could not speak frankly about it without further alienating his opponent's.

The sort of people who make up Bush's base cannot be won over by insisting that Christianity mandates concern for the poor, and that Bush has shown none. For most fundamentalist evangelicals think that poverty is a punishment either for insufficient gumption or for failure to establish the sort of personal relationship to Jesus that insures worldly success. So it would be a mistake for Democrats to start sounding more pious. They cannot give up on abortion rights and gay rights without alienating many blue voters, but if they do not do so they cannot hope to win over any red ones. Once again, Democratic candidates are boxed in.

As far as I can see, the only recourse Democrats have is to reverse the drift toward the center that began after McGovern's defeat in 1972, and once again put themselves forward as the Party of the Poor. This may not work, but it is the only card they have left to play. They should beat the drum about the widening gap between haves and have-nots, about the humiliation and misery of families without health insurance, about the scandal of disappearing pensions and about outrageous corporate tax dodges, about fabulously overpaid corporate executives, about Halliburton and Enron. If they adopt this strategy, at least they will be positioned to take advantage of any future economic downturn, and can hope for something like a reprise of the 1932 election. If they instead edge still further to the right, the Republicans will simply shift the goal posts by doing the same.

Richard Rorty is the author of Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature *(Princeton) and* Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America *(Harvard).*

Danielle Allen

FREEDOM IS ON THE MARCH, said George W. Bush in the presidential debates. He's right. For the past forty years, rightward-leaning political thinkers have been developing rigorous accounts of the human and economic value of political liberty and arguments about how to secure and protect that liberty. Coherent theories of liberty developed by the likes of Milton Friedman's and Leo Strauss's fellow travelers gained precision and force for being targeted responses to Soviet totalitarianism and communism.

But what about the Patriot Act? How can that be reconciled with a description of the Republicans as the party of liberty? The pursuit of liberty reasonably requires the reasonable pursuit of security, but the unmediated pursuit of liberty and security easily evolves into pursuit of dominance, whether at home or abroad.

By what, then, might the pursuit of liberty reasonably be mediated? By the pursuit of equality.

Democracy depends on both liberty and equality, and a constant, messy struggle between these two ungainly and not perfectly compatible fraternal twins. To the degree that this country now divides into red and blue states, the red states are those where, of the two ideals, liberty leads; in the blue states, equality leads, despite the fact that the party of equality has not lately offered any particularly convincing philosophical accounts of the human and economic value of equality, nor clear arguments about how to protect equality. (When John Kerry wheels around a debating stage and, after surveying the audience, says, "I suspect there are only three people here who are going to be affected: the President, me and Charlie," it's not even clear that the party of equality is the party of equality.)

Liberals and progressives need to get back to the hard work that precedes policies and slogans: thought-work. We need a thorough, theoretical defense of the foundational status of equality in democratic life.

Freedom has always been on the march in this country. Equality has had more difficulty gaining its own foothold. Now is the time.

Danielle Allen, author of Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship Since Brown v. Board of Education *(Chicago), is professor in the departments of classics and political science and a member of the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago.*

Beth Shulman

IN THE WAKE OF THE ELECTION, we Democrats do not have to go looking for moral values. We merely need to articulate a vision of America based on the moral values we already believe in—fairness, opportunity and respect for others. It is a moral issue whether or not a child has healthcare, whether a family has quality childcare or whether parents have enough to feed their children or send them to college. It is a moral issue that we give tax breaks to the rich when millions of Americans go hungry or can't afford a doctor's visit.

For too long, we have been on the defensive. We need to define an America of hope rather than fear. We need to champion the economic concerns that matter most to Americans—a living wage, healthcare, educational opportunities and time to be with one's family. We need to champion a government that represents not the top 5 percent but all hardworking Americans who struggle to provide their families with the basics of a decent life.

We need to continue to push at the state and local levels to bring changes that help working Americans. Initiatives to raise the minimum wage and provide healthcare won handily in states that went for Bush. Yet while we should build on coalitions formed during this election, we cannot just talk issues and policies. Without a clear vision of America based on the values we believe in, we will face another Republican victory. Voters do judge issues through a moral lens. But if the other side is the only one articulating a vision, we will continue to lose. John Edwards began a conversation about "the two Americas." The Democratic Party needs to continue that

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conversation and set forth a bold agenda based on values that will insure economic opportunity, fairness and prosperity for all.

★★★★

Beth Shulman is the author of The Betrayal of Work: How Low-Wage Jobs Fail 30 Million Americans *(New Press). She is a lawyer and consultant and is co-directing the Fairness Initiative on Low-Wage Work.*

Tom Andrews

THE BRUTAL DESTRUCTION OF FALLUJA in order to "save" it and a recently published report that hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children are suffering from acute malnutrition—an affliction that has doubled since the US invasion—are just two of the many compelling reasons that stopping the Bush Administration's war in Iraq is a moral imperative. The leadership required to meet this imperative will not come from Democrats in Congress. It will come from a focused, determined and relentless antiwar movement.

In addition to being a moral calling, a mass movement to end the war could deter the Administration's assault on the principles and values we cherish. It has been said that some of the good things President Lyndon Johnson hoped to achieve with his "Great Society" became casualties of the Vietnam War. Likewise, George W. Bush's capacity to do many bad things at home and abroad could be diminished by his war in Iraq.

Exit polls showed that Americans are deeply divided on Bush's war. A plurality believes that the war in Iraq is not making America safer. The daily diet of horrific images from Iraq will only push the number of disaffected Americans upward, causing discomfort among prowar members of Congress. Add to this the increasing chorus of antiwar voices from the Republican coalition, and Karl Rove has something to worry about.

The Bush war in Iraq presents an opportunity for progressive organizing. The invasion and occupation of Iraq outraged millions of soon-to-be activists and contributors, swelling the campaign coffers and volunteer ranks of progressive organizations and Democratic political campaigns. This network of supporters and activists—1 million of whom called or faxed the Senate in a single day before the invasion—represents a powerful political force that could make it difficult for Bush to drum up the funds and the troops to "stay the course" in Iraq. Now is the time for this movement to mount vigorous opposition to the Administration's request for as much as an additional $75 billion for the Iraq war, and to the nomination of an Attorney General who believes that the torture exposed at Abu Ghraib is perfectly legal and that treaties like the Geneva Convention are "obsolete."

These battles are opportunities to provide an increasingly skeptical public with a new narrative about the US military occupation of Iraq, starting with why there is no military solution. They are also opportunities to build strong coalitions in Congressional districts across the country, including labor, clergy, students, city and town councils, neighborhood organizations and all groups who are watching the day-to-day impact of a federal government squandering resources needed at home. There is an opportunity to build alliances with "unusual suspects," including antiwar conservatives and Republicans.

Perhaps most important, there is an opportunity to forge working partnerships with veterans of the Iraq war and their families as

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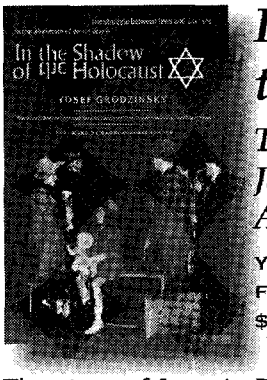

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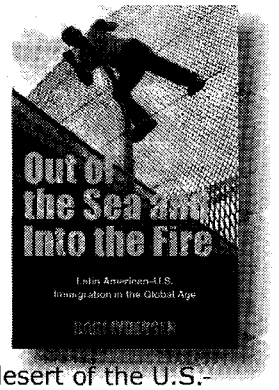

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well as reservists, National Guardsmen and -women and the families of the victims of 9/11 who reject the idea that the war in Iraq is making anyone safer from terrorism. I would like to see former prisoners of war confront President Bush's nominee for Attorney General not only with the immorality of his infamous memos linked to Abu Ghraib but with the fact that an "obsolete" Geneva Convention is a threat to every American who is wearing, or ever will wear, their nation's uniform.

Finally, the Bush war in Iraq presents progressives with an obligation and an opportunity to act locally and globally. Speaking about the UN in the wake of the US-led invasion of Iraq, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan recently said: "We have reached a fork in the road. This may be a moment no less decisive that 1945 itself, when the UN was founded." It is time to reach out and work with progressives around the world, starting with those from member nations of the US-led Iraq coalition.

There is a moral imperative to ending the Bush war in Iraq.

There is also an important opportunity to drain the "political capital" President Bush believes he has accumulated, before he is able to spend it.

Tom Andrews is the national director of Win Without War.

Noam Chomsky

THE ELECTIONS ARE LIKELY TO HAVE significant policy consequences, particularly harmful in the domestic arena, and in accelerating the "transformation of the military" that some prominent strategic analysts warn, realistically, may lead to "ultimate doom." But they tell us little about the country, though major studies of public opinion released just before the election are highly informative.

In particular, we learn that there were no elections, in any serious sense of the term. Voting patterns were similar to 2000. A small shift in preferences would have put Kerry in the White House, also telling us very little. As previously, elections were run by the PR industry. Its guiding principle is deceit. That is true in its regular vocation of undermining the fanciful markets of doctrine, in which informed consumers make rational choices. And the same practices are used when it is called upon to undermine democracy. That businesses spend vast sums to delude consumers, not inform them, is too obvious to merit comment. It is entirely natural that they should do the same when they are selling candidates, not toothpaste. And voters appear to be aware of it.

About 10 percent of voters said their choice would be based on the candidate's "agendas/ideas/platforms/goals." The rest would choose what the industry calls "qualities" and "values," the political counterpart to TV ads, with about as much relation to reality. The most careful studies reveal that voters tended to believe that the candidates shared their beliefs, even when this was demonstrably false.

Far more instructive are the virtually unreported attitudes. To illustrate, a considerable majority believe that the United States should accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and the World Court, sign the Kyoto Protocols, allow the UN to take the lead in international crises (including security, reconstruction, and political transition in Iraq), rely on diplomatic and economic measures more than military ones in the "war on terror," and use force only if there is "strong evidence that the country is in imminent danger of being attacked," thus rejecting the bipartisan consensus on "pre-emptive war." Overwhelming majorities favor expansion of purely domestic programs: primarily healthcare (80 percent), but also aid to education and Social Security. And so it continues. There is little connection between public opinion and electoral practices.

The election has elicited much hopelessness and despair. The lessons should be different. There is ample opportunity for education and organizing to create—in part re-create—a functioning democratic culture in which public opinion plays some role.

Noam Chomsky's latest book is Hegemony or Survival *(Owl).*

Mary Robinson

AS AN IRISH CITIZEN LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES, my travels put me in regular contact with Americans from "red" and "blue" states alike. Most tell me the world is less secure and more divided than at any time in recent memory. They want leadership that strengthens human security at home and abroad. But many aren't convinced either Democrats or Republicans have a compelling vision of how that can be achieved.

I am encouraged by an emerging awareness among Americans that US domestic and international policies are increasingly out of sync with long-held American beliefs in fairness, opportunity and shared responsibility. Many people in this country are concerned about the millions around the globe who struggle to survive through grinding poverty. They understand that US positions are not always supportive of those in need, and send signals abroad that the most powerful nation is frequently only concerned with narrowly defined national interests. They are convinced that unless the United States plays a constructive role in promoting social and economic development for all, frustration will lead to further social unrest and political instability, threatening human security today and in the future.

The Democratic Party, as well as governments and political parties around the world, should see the election results as an opportunity to form a new movement based around shared values and shared responsibilities. The good news is that such an agenda already exists in the international human rights agenda.

That broad framework for action covers civil and political rights—to liberty, freedom of speech and religion, freedom from torture, and fair trial—all part of the best American traditions. But it includes as well economic, social and cultural rights—to food, safe water, health, education and decent work. These rights are

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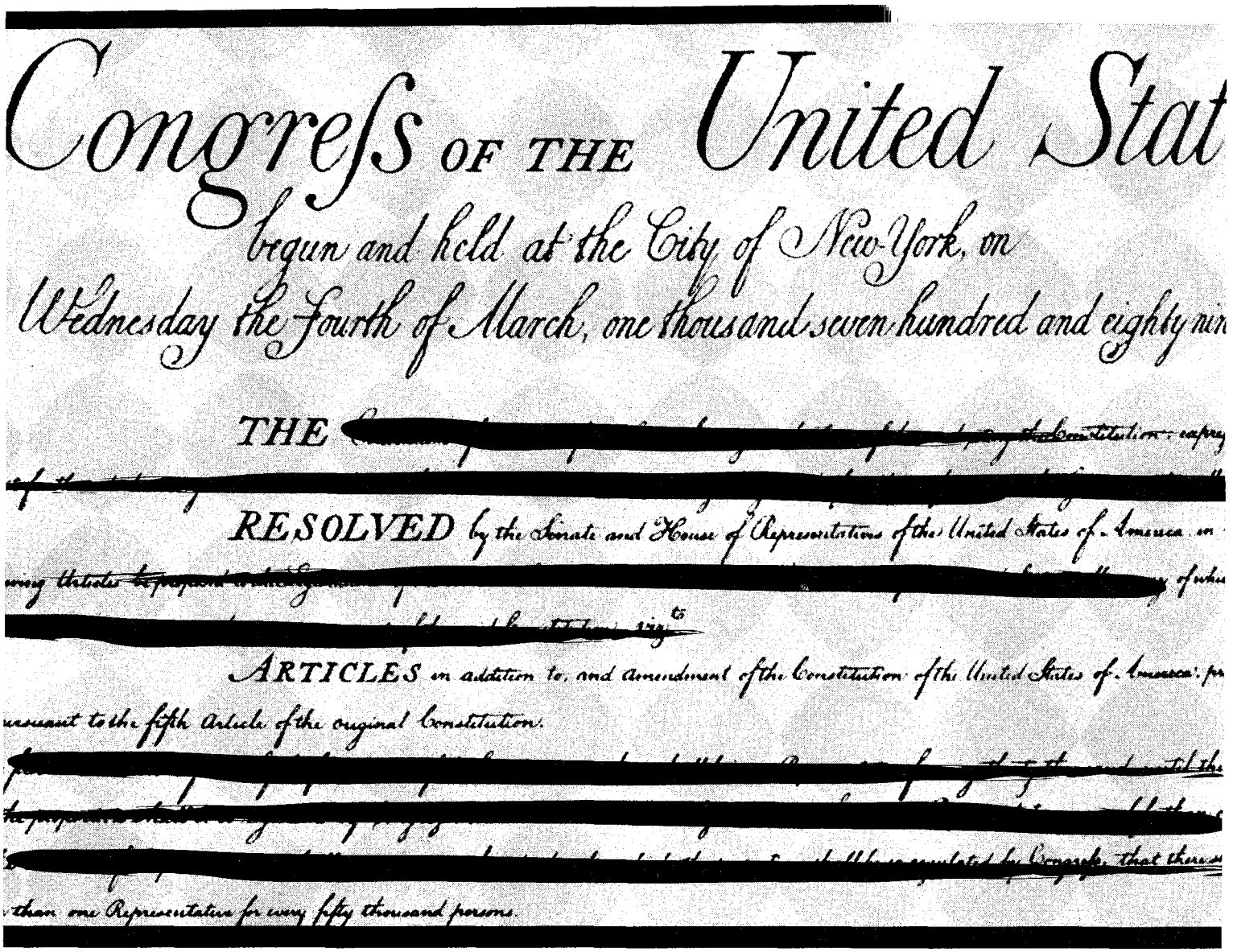
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much less familiar in the United States, yet also spring directly from American leadership under President Franklin Roosevelt, who said all people should be guaranteed freedom from fear as well as freedom from want.

If we hope to address problems of injustice and despair that incubate the indiscriminate rage and violence we see around the world today, problems which have widened the divides between rich and poor, secular and religious, we should renew our commitment to making human rights a reality for all.

Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, is executive director of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative.

Jorge Ramos

THE DEMOCRATS DID NOT GET IT. Well-informed voices predicted early in the campaign that this presidential election was going to be decided by Hispanic voters. The argument was solid: In a close election, with the country polarized by the war, 9 million Hispanic voters—concentrated in battleground states—were going to be the ultimate swing vote. But John Kerry and the Democratic Party did not take this seriously enough—and they lost.

The election was decided by Latino voters in Colorado, Nevada and New Mexico. President Bush won Colorado with a 100,000-vote lead, Nevada by 21,500 votes and New Mexico by 6,000. That means if 64,000 Hispanic voters had chosen Kerry instead of Bush in those three states, Kerry would have had nineteen additional electoral votes, for a total of 271, which would have won him the White House. Those 64,000 Hispanic votes—which represent less than 1 percent of the total Hispanic vote—could have been gained with relative ease through more interviews in Spanish, more Hispanic TV and radio ads and by linking the Kerry campaign in Colorado with that of Hispanic Senator-elect Ken Salazar.

Democrats made three big mistakes. First, they did not choose governor Bill Richardson López as Kerry's running mate. Second, the mid-July polls that indicated a 2-to-1 lead for Kerry over Bush with Hispanic voters gave them a false sense of security; this led them to de-emphasize the importance of the Hispanic vote and to concentrate their efforts and money in non-Hispanic states. Third, Kerry gave only twenty-five interviews to the Spanish-language media (in comparison, George W. Bush gave more than 100 interviews in 2000). The consequences of these errors are plain to see: Bush got 44 percent of the Hispanic vote and Kerry 53 percent, significantly less than the 62 percent won by Al Gore four years before. What happened? Kerry never connected with the Latino voters and did not have a clear strategy to win the Hispanic vote.

On the other hand, the Bush team understood early on that their victory depended on the Hispanic vote; since Ronald Reagan, every Republican candidate who has won more than 30 percent of the Hispanic vote has taken the White House. They sensed that Hispanics tend to have conservative values, particularly with regard to abortion, religion and same-sex marriage, and they directed their message that way. In the end, Bush won the five Hispanic battleground states: Florida, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada and New Mexico.

If Democrats cannot reverse these trends, they won't be able to regain control of the Congress and the White House for generations to come. Democrats have not recognized the importance of the Hispanic vote in the past two presidential elections. We will have to wait until 2008 to see if they have finally learned their lesson.

Jorge Ramos is senior anchorman of Univision News and author of The Latino Wave *(Rayo). His upcoming book,* Dying to Cross, *will be published by HarperCollins this spring.*

Steve Cobble & Joe Velasquez

IT HAS FREQUENTLY BEEN POINTED OUT that John Kerry would be President if fewer than 70,000 Ohioans had switched their votes. What hasn't been noticed is that a similar number holds for the "Cactus Corner"—if 64,000 voters had switched their votes in three Southwestern states, Kerry would have won another nineteen electoral votes, enough to win the White House.

Kerry trailed George W. Bush by only about 6,000 votes in New Mexico, by only 21,500 in Nevada and by fewer than 100,000 in Colorado (a big state in the campaign, as Democrats gained in the presidential race, won a historic Senate seat with Ken Salazar, won back a House seat and gained state legislative seats). These statistics bolster a point we made in *The Nation* almost a year ago, in "Blue States, Latino Voters" [January 5]—that the "path to the White House runs through the Latino Southwest, not the former Confederacy."

Our point is not that Ohio and Florida were the wrong targets in 2004. We agreed with those targets. It's that the future for Democrats is brighter in the Southwest than in those deep red states below the Mason-Dixon line.

Consider this: Besides Florida, the closest former Confederate states showed Bush winning by nine percentage points (Virginia, Arkansas). On the other hand, of the six states which W. won by five points or less, two of them were in the Midwest (Iowa, Ohio), one is Florida and three were in the Southwest (New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado).

What do these Southwestern states have in common? A large and growing Latino constituency (a rising demographic that should soon also have an impact in two other red states, Florida and Arizona), plus a strong overall environmental sensibility that is usually overlooked by Democrats and steamrolled by Republicans.

The 2004 exit polls seem to show that Bush made gains with Latinos. However, based on an exit poll specifically targeting

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Latino voters by the Willie C. Velasquez Institute, plus our own analysis, we believe that the 44 percent Bush supposedly won from Latinos is too high. While W. probably did make some smaller gains, we believe the national split was still closer to 3-to-2 in favor of Kerry, especially in the Southwestern battleground states.

And even if the exit polls are right, that still means that Kerry won a solid victory among Hispanics, despite losing nationally. We would also point out that the smart strategy for the future remains the same—to target the growing Latino vote for issue work, organizing, voter registration and mobilization.

What issues are key? We'd start with the brazen voter suppression tactics the GOP openly employed this election. We should fight back fiercely against these immoral and un-American tactics, and "brand" the Republicans as the party that tries hard to keep African-Americans and Latinos from exercising their right to vote.

Plus, Hispanics care more than most Americans about public education. They want decent healthcare, good jobs and living wages. They are open to labor unions, and less supportive of the Iraq war than whites are. Not surprisingly, they care about issues concerning Latin America, trade, immigration, travel to Cuba. And since Latinos in the United States are very urban, they care about crime and police issues and the lack of affordable housing.

The next Democratic Party leader, and progressive activists, should focus intensely on building stronger connections with Latinos. The heavily Hispanic states of the Southwest, the "Cactus Corner," could be part of a winning strategy in 2008.

Joe Velasquez is a founder of a new website, www.HispanicAction.com, a former union official and a deputy political director in the Clinton White House. Steve Cobble grew up in New Mexico politics, was political director for the National Rainbow Coalition and served as strategist for the Kucinich presidential campaign.

Troy Duster

THE REPUBLICANS HAVE DUG BOTH themselves and the nation into a very deep hole, combining an unwinnable war of occupation in Iraq with domestic policies that have produced the largest gap between rich and poor in all of American history. A day of reckoning will surely come—and rather than rushing to act as willing accomplices, the Democrats should be developing strategies that will provide the nation with alternative and corrective pathways when that day arrives.

Interpreting the election results, we get to choose between two nightmares: One, 60 million Americans knowingly voted for George W. Bush, ratifying the right-wing ideology guiding his Administration. Or two, we have just witnessed a second successive nonviolent coup d'état—a massive voter fraud that produced, among other anomalies, a gap between exit polls and paperless electronic voting tallies.

If we assume that Bush actually won, progressives are entitled to disappointment, but not shock. For at least a full century, every industrialized nation has had a strong right-wing base hovering at about 15–20 percent of the population. Energizing that constituency to be a potent force is contingent on many factors, but it is an enduring potential, smoldering, waiting to be stoked by those who would "go there." It is a mistake to think of 1930s Germany, Italy and Spain as exceptional and inexplicable political aberra-

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tions that could not happen here. We easily forget that those right-wing governments had strong electoral showings and sympathizers in many Western nations.

To suggest that Democrats move closer to this base, emulate or embrace its ideas or even call these ideas "moral values" is morally unacceptable. Too few in the electorate recognize that our taken-for-granted institutions of social justice did not arise, as the Republican drumbeat tells them, from "bad values" but as a decent, humane response to widespread woeful living conditions. Our national commitment to offset the attacks on these efforts to achieve greater social justice reflects the true American moral values.

Troy Duster, professor of sociology at New York University, is a senior fellow of the Rockridge Institute.

Jonathan Kozol

EDUCATION BARELY SURFACED in the final weeks of the electoral campaign. This was partly because George Bush effectively displaced domestic issues (other than his coded emphasis on "faith" and "values") from the nation's attention, but also because the Democrats have abdicated any serious oppositional position on the President's benighted test-and-drill agenda for our public schools. In saying he would continue to enforce these policies but would simply come up with more money to enable districts to fulfill these goals, Senator Kerry sounded the familiar note of tired and defensive semi-liberals, capitulating to a right-wing ideology while promising more federal funding to advance that ideology perhaps a bit more evenhandedly.

The late Paul Wellstone openly denounced the President's obsession with the measuring of children's skills while starving children in poor neighborhoods of the amplitude of learning still afforded to the children of the privileged. With the exception of a handful of his colleagues in the Senate and most of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, Wellstone found no backing for his eloquent dissent within the Democratic Party. It is dissent and indignation on that order that was missing from too many of the statements Kerry made on education and related issues of equality for children. Here was a highly principled, intensely decent and enlightened man who, like most of his party, somehow could not rise above the terms of argument that have been locked in place by educational conservatives.

I doubt that this will greatly change until there is a grassroots movement in defense of children on a scale progressives have not dared envision since the year Ronald Reagan came to office. It may seem to some beyond imagination, at this moment of defeat, that liberals can reignite the passion and assemble the resources it would take to counteract the power of the right-wing juggernaut in education policy today. But we will never win the victories we do not fight for.

Jonathan Kozol is the author of Amazing Grace *(Crown) and other books on urban education.*

Blanche Wiesen Cook

IN 1940 FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT confronted an entirely divided country, divided sectionally and politically much as it is today, and declared: "We will have a liberal democracy, or we will return to the Dark Ages."

Liberals to Arms! We need to regroup, reconsider, reorganize. For thirty years I have been privileged to study America's great liberals, particularly Dwight Eisenhower and Eleanor Roosevelt. They have much to tell us about where we might go from here, and how once again to get there.

To see how far along a dastardly path we have crawled, it is important to remember that Eisenhower called himself "a militant liberal." On November 16, 1953, he wrote to John Foster Dulles that his Administration was "committed to...policies that will bring the greatest good to the greatest number. This means that there must be lifted from the minds of men the fears of disaster, poverty, and old age." He campaigned for national healthcare and appointed former Women's Army Corps commander Oveta Culp Hobby to head his new Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Together with Eleanor Roosevelt and her friend Esther Lape, Hobby and Eisenhower fought for a single-payer health system to cover all Americans. Eisenhower increased the minimum wage, extended the excess-profits tax, expanded the public-housing program and warned the nation of the dangers of the military-industrial complex, which he originally called the Congressional-industrial-military complex.

Eisenhower wrote his brother Edgar on May 2, 1956: "Should any political party attempt to abolish social security, unemployment insurance, and eliminate labor laws and farm programs, you would not hear of that party again.... There is a tiny splinter group, of course, that believes you can do these things. Among them are H.L. Hunt...a few other Texas oil millionaires, and an occasional politician or businessman from other areas. Their number is negligible and they are stupid."

Eleanor Roosevelt's work for affordable housing was central to her democratic vision. She always said governments exist for only one purpose: to make life better for all people. But, she continued, you can never depend on politicians to do anything about that. You have to go door to door, block by block, to get your wants and needs met. During the 1920s ER and her friends went "trooping for democracy" to ask potential voters what they wanted, what they needed. She asked questions and worked to build movements—movements for women, peace, community. This year thousands of volunteers followed her advice. My partner Clare Coss and I went to St. Louis with ACT, MoveOn.org and Planned Parenthood.

After a lifetime of activism, ER addressed the future. In her last book, *Tomorrow Is Now*, published posthumously in 1963, she called for ardent courage and refortified liberalism:

> Long ago, there was a noble word, LIBERAL, which derived from the word FREE [libre]. Now a strange thing happened to that word. A man named Hitler made it a term of abuse, a matter of suspicion, because those who were not with him were against him, and liberals had no use for Hitler. And then another man named McCarthy cast the same opprobrium on the word. Indeed, there was a time—a short but dismaying time—when many Americans began to distrust the word which derived from FREE. One thing we must all do. We must cherish and honor the word FREE or it will cease to apply to us....

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To forestall horror and save the rule of law (American constitutional law, international law and the promise of human rights), we will go trooping for democracy. Our future depends on a simple fact: People must have more to live for than to die for.

Blanche Wiesen Cook is Distinguished Professor of History at John Jay College. She is the author of Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume 1, 1884–1933 *and* Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume 2, The Defining Years, 1933–1938 *(both Penguin). Volume 3 is forthcoming.*

Medea Benjamin

MANY OF US IN THE GREEN PARTY made a tremendous compromise by campaigning in swing states for such a miserable standard-bearer for the progressive movement as John Kerry. Well, I've had it. As George Bush says, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me—you can't get fooled again."

For those of you willing to keep wading in the muddy waters of the Democratic Party, all power to you. I plan to work with the Greens to get more Green candidates elected to local office.

Let's stop the infighting, though. Dems, Greens and other progressives must not only respect one another's choices, we must start using these different "inside-outside" strategies to our collective advantage. A strategically placed Green/progressive pull could conceivably prevent a suicidal Democratic lurch to the right.

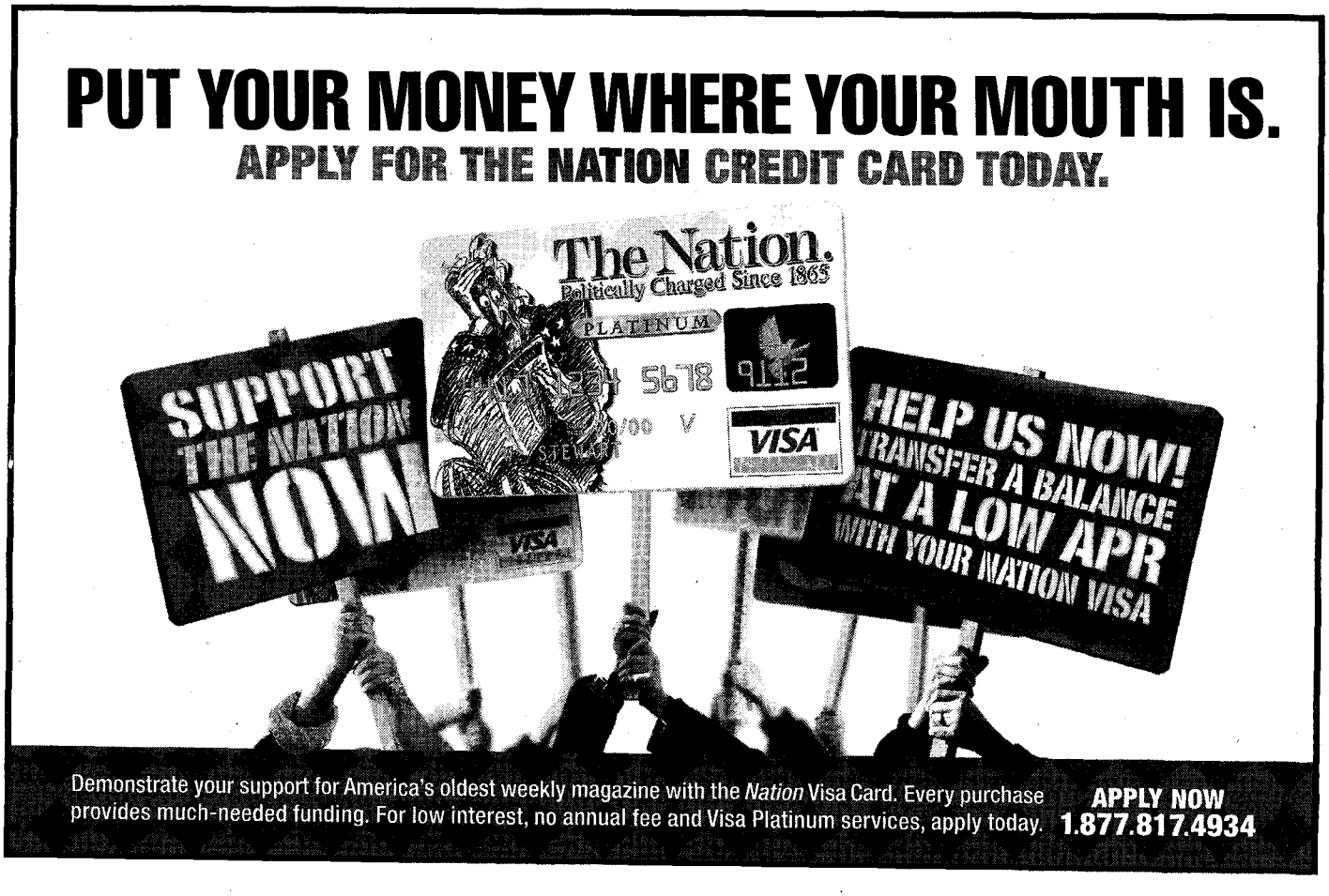
Regardless of our party preferences, we must build strategic alliances on two key issues of our day: electoral reform and ending the occupation of Iraq.

Let's jointly promote a Voters' Bill of Rights that includes standardized voting machines with paper trails, nonpartisan administration of elections, instant-runoff voting, a national election day holiday, an end to felon disenfranchisement and others changes outlined in our ten-point Voters' Bill of Rights (see www.globalexchange.org).

Let's get millions of Americans to sign on to the Voters' Bill of Rights; let's get city, county and state legislators on board. And once we have a groundswell of support, then we demand that Congress enact legislation enshrining these rights. When we have an electoral system that's free, fair and trustworthy, it will be much easier to get progressives elected.

Re Iraq: We need—urgently—to send massive people-to-people aid to Falluja (see www.codepinkalert.org). They desperately need the aid and we desperately need to show the world that there are caring, compassionate Americans who are appalled by Bush's thuggery. We need to demand from both the Republicans and Democrats a realistic exit strategy to end the occupation. We need to hound Halliburton until it cries uncle and gives up on war profiteering. We need to widen and deepen our peace movement by reaching out to people most affected by this war—poor communities and military families. And given the ominous statements about Iran of late, we need to steel ourselves this time to effectively stop a new war.

Strengthening the framework of our internal democracy (count every vote, every vote counts) and fighting against em-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pire (money for jobs, not for war) are strategies that will resonate with the vast majority of Americans and set the stage for future electoral victories.

Medea Benjamin, co-founder of Global Exchange and Code Pink, was a Green Party candidate for Senate in 2000.

Bertha Lewis & Bob Master

IN A TIME OF WAR AND INSECURITY, Karl Rove made Kerry unacceptable even to voters who repeatedly expressed a loss of confidence in the President. The Republicans systematically undermined Kerry's life story (Swift Vets) and personal integrity ($87 billion flip-flop), while creating a politicized climate of fear with single-minded purpose.

By contrast, Kerry and the Democrats could not make Bush's own life story (inexperienced rich kid, chickenhawk) a part of the picture, were unable to convincingly tap into resentment of corporate rip-offs (Enron et al. never became an issue) and simply could not make the case that Bush is recruiting terrorists, not defeating them.

We are not naïve. This defeat was a major setback. But it is time to neither panic nor despair. As the Democratic experience of 1964 demonstrates, even a massive mandate can turn to dust in a matter of years as events unfold. Bush's so-called mandate doesn't come close to the LBJ vote of '64. Indeed, Bush can claim little mandate beyond having successfully discredited his opponent.

Here in New York, we can use our blue-state haven as a laboratory to grow new alternative policies. Over the next few years, we can help elect a progressive governor and work with him or her to develop effective public programs that truly address the needs of working men and women—for jobs, healthcare, childcare and good schools.

We believe the experience of the Working Families Party provides a source of hope. From its modest inception six years ago, the WFP has developed into a class-conscious, multiracial, competent vehicle for progressive values. We are on the verge of raising the state minimum wage; the party won a district attorney race in Albany County that could help break the logjam on the Rockefeller drug laws; and candidates for offices from county legislator to governor regularly beat a path to our door.

We are testing Justice Brandeis's thesis of the states as laboratories. Our experiment with fusion voting—New York's unique system of multiple ballot lines and cross endorsement—has proved that it is an effective tool for building power for people who are neither wealthy nor well-connected. Through fusion, the Working Families Party provides the margin of victory in race after race across the state, getting votes from the right, left and apathetic center. A similar party has begun to grow in Connecticut. The WFP looks forward to replicating our experiment in other states where fusion is legal or may become so in the near future.

Bertha Lewis of ACORN and Bob Master of the CWA serve as co-chairs of the Working Families Party (www.workingfamiliesparty.org).

Dan Carter

FOR 2008, THE DEMOCRATS SHOULD SELECT the master-marketer and tactician who can best discredit the alternative brand and sell the product. Although they should probably avoid the Rove model (i.e., someone with the ethical compass of a feral sewer rat), a slightly more ruthless James Carville might be in order to help run the campaign. The chosen leader should be a physically attractive, white male, Midwestern or border-state politician who is able to feel the pain of the American people (or fake it satisfactorily) and talk about Jesus without looking as if he has stumbled, fully clothed, into a nudist colony. He should forget about most of the Old Confederacy, since a clear majority of white Southerners will vote Republican as long as there is a flag to be waved, a homosexual to be pilloried, an abortionist to be consigned to hell, a tax to be cut and a program for the poor to be eviscerated. (Never mind that Republican right-wing economic policies have had a particularly devastating effect on a region that has some of the worst pockets of poverty in the nation.)

As the Iraq body count mounts, it may be advantageous for him to point out—regretfully—the criminal stupidity of the current Administration's foreign policies while swearing to kill more terrorists if he's elected. Personally, if necessary. With his bare hands.

Finally, the ideal candidate should be fuzzy on the social issues but resolute in defending Medicare and Social Security. The youth turnout may have been disappointing in this election, but those post-65 codgers will vote until the Social Security death benefit check is in the mail.

While most of us cringe at such a cynical strategy, we delude ourselves if we believe there is a vast untapped liberal electorate waiting to be unleashed if we could only nominate a photogenic Dennis Kucinich. Support in this country for a Western European style social democracy has been withering for thirty-five years. We should not underestimate the importance of the presidency as a megaphone for shaping public opinion and redirecting political priorities, but electing a pragmatic Democrat will do little to reverse this long march to the right.

And that's the good news. The "Christian" right is simply reactionary politics with gospel lip gloss, but its fearmongering message has touched a responsive nerve among millions of Americans in and outside the Bible Belt and the movement shows little signs of abating. Add the Republican lock on most of the electoral votes of the Old Confederacy and the Rocky Mountain states, a sclerotic political system, a campaign financing system run amok, a ruthlessly efficient right-wing political and propaganda apparatus and an electorate befuddled by a lap-dog media. It's enough to make a *Nation* reader check out the Canadian immigration website.

We now face a generation-long campaign to reconnect our liberal traditions and policies to the day-to-day struggles—and best aspirations—of working Americans. As for me and my house, we will continue to struggle against racism, sexism and homophobia. While there are many battles to be fought in the years to come, however, nothing is more important than attacking the dog-eat-dog ideological assumptions of the new corporate state that now dominate American politics. With our bare hands.

Dan Carter is the Educational Foundation University Professor, University of South Carolina.

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Juliet Schor

ON NOVEMBER 2 HALF THE VOTING PUBLIC supported a President who would be sending their sons and daughters to die in an imperial quagmire, handing over their hard-earned Social Security contributions to his scandal-ridden Wall Street cronies, blocking access to cheaper prescription drugs and accelerating the catastrophe of global warming. Pretty stunning. Did Republicans neutralize these realities through culture and character? No, and yes.

Republicans have steadily consolidated their control of the electoral process. Kerry got beaten in Ohio partly by a nefarious plan that denied Democratic precincts an adequate supply of voting machines. Nationwide, he lost votes to software breakdowns. How many is unknown at this point, as is the scope of e-fraud. No amount of cultural repositioning will cure this problem. Democrats' top priority must be to accelerate the momentum for nonpartisan electoral reform and not worry about looking like sore losers. They need to own fairness and transparency, hammering away on the theme that every vote should count, and right now it doesn't. Demonize the Republicans for opposing recounts, suppressing voters and installing insecure e-voting systems with proprietary software owned by partisan companies.

That said, Democrats must also gain ground on authenticity (character) and quality of life (culture). The former trumps policy positions and facts. It's an animating value in consumer markets, where authenticity is created by promoting a brand myth and history. It's why companies use "founded in" language, and niche brands don't reveal their corporate owners. Once presidential politics became a branding exercise, the value of authenticity soared, and we got "postrational politics." It explains the appeal of McCain and Dean. Bush successfully rebranded as a real-deal Texan. Kerry got hammered as an opportunist. Whether it's possible for him to successfully rebrand himself in the next four years is an interesting question.

On culture, it's not "god, guns and gays" the Democrats should address but the quality-of-life issues that cross the red-blue divide—excessive working hours, loss of community, commercialized childhood and rampant materialism. A people's environmentalism could target the poisoning of food and neighborhoods. Eighty-five percent of Americans believe society's priorities are "out of whack," and they're not all in blue states. But to be authentic on these issues Democrats need to give up corporate money and remake themselves as the party of small donations. It's a bold but high payoff move that would enable both cultural and economic populism, differentiate the Democrats from their opponents and free them up to offer real, galvanizing solutions.

Juliet Schor, professor of sociology at Boston College, is the author of Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture *(Scribner).*

EXCHANGE

CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

and other sorts of chads—could definitely be read as votes. Of this small group, Al Gore gained a measly five-vote advantage. More than 90 percent of the "spoiled" Miami ballots were not countable. The Ohio "spoiled" ballots would not be as easily tallied as Palast indicates. Using my Florida experience as a guide, one could estimate that the "spoiled" ballots in Ohio would yield 6,000 to 8,000 readable votes. Even if every one were a Kerry vote, Kerry would still fall far short.

I agree with Palast that the voting system has many deficiencies—which I have noted in my recent articles for this magazine—and that certain problems seem to hit low-income and minority areas disproportionately. But Palast should not inform his readers that counting the provisional ballots and hand-counting the "spoiled" ballots in Ohio would produce different results. If only the remedy were so easy.

Judith Faust points to a paper produced by Steven Freeman of the University of Pennsylvania, which claimed that discrepancies between the media consortium exit polls and the vote count in Ohio, Florida and Pennsylvania were a "250 million to one" shot. But, as I have noted, pollster John Zogby says his exit polls had Bush leading in Ohio and Florida. And when I recently was on a radio show with Avi Rubin, a renowned computer scientist and a leading critic of Diebold and electronic voting, I heard Rubin express skepticism about Freeman's statistical analysis.

Regarding the Dopp chart, I did note that Walter Mebane and other political scientists had debunked it. The Dopp study maintains that optical scanning machines were rigged in Florida. But then a study written by researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, concluded that anomalies in the Florida vote count—which cost Kerry 130,000 to 260,000 votes—were due to irregularities with electronic touchscreen machines. Yet then a report released by researchers at the California Institute of Technology and MIT maintained there was "no evidence, based on exit polls, that electronic voting machines were used to steal the election" in Florida. So what we have, to date, is a battle of statistics. And no statistics-based claim of fraud, as of this writing, has been so compelling as to win endorsement from a significant number of prominent statisticians.

And here's an interesting development: Ralph Nader forced a recount in New Hampshire, pointing to the gap between exit polls and the actual vote count. Nader argued that it appeared that Bush had received inflated totals in communities that had used optical scanning voting machines. But the initial stage of the recount produced a tally that differed by only fifteen votes from among the 12,000 cast. The exit poll–actual vote gap in this instance was seemingly no indication of fraud.

As for Faust's point about the susceptibility of electronic voting machines to tampering, she is right. That is reason to demand a better, more transparent system, open to easy review and auditing and not dominated by secretive private companies with links to the Republican Party. But it is not evidence that fraud occurred in Florida, Ohio or elsewhere. (For such fraud to succeed it probably would have to have happened in more than merely a "few" counties.) She is also correct to note that attempts to address this matter have been thwarted by Republicans in Congress.

Perhaps solid evidence of fraud will emerge. But even if it does not, there remains the need to reform the voting system and insure it is fair, safe and not vulnerable to covert shenanigans.

DAVID CORN

MS. TAKE

■ In Ashley Sayeau's "Southern Ms." [Dec. 6], North Carolina has, in fact, elected a female US senator: Elizabeth Dole, in 2002.

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COMMENT

(Continued From Page 6)

services: He is no foreign fighter but an Amsterdam homeboy.

The panicked politicians of the right have not quite taken this in: Their proposals to ban imams trained outside the Netherlands, strip people convicted of terrorism of their citizenship and deport 25,000 undocumented migrants all assume that militant Islam can be kept out by building higher walls. Meanwhile, there have been more than twenty attacks on mosques and Islamic schools—two were burned to the ground—and revenge attacks on churches.

As the Amsterdam anthropologist Thijl Sunier explains, *gedogen* is not at all the same as integration. The Dutch government's belated attempts in the 1980s to support immigrant workers focused mainly on their material needs, leaving culture, religion and social welfare to community organizations—a throwback to the old Dutch "pillar" system, which organized society along confessional lines. The positive side of the present situation is, he says, "a growing awareness that Muslims are here to stay." But, he goes on, "the wing of the Liberal [i.e., conservative] Party now in power [in coalition with the Christian Democrats] has increasingly taken on the rhetoric of Fortuyn."

Claiming to rescue the security agenda from the right, centrist politicians across Europe are exploiting people's fears of terrorism and social breakdown. In Britain the Labour Party has just unveiled a shamefully calculated program of security measures in preparation for the next election. The left, on the other hand, has itself turned a blind eye to the brand of jihadi activism shaped twenty years ago in the mountains of Afghanistan and now becoming, through the Internet, a discourse of dissent for disaffected youth from Fez to Finsbury Park. Despite having to face growing Islamophobia, the great majority of Europe's 10 to 20 million Muslims are way ahead on this—which is why so many turned out to protest in France when two French journalists were taken hostage in Iraq to demand the repeal of the law banning religious symbols in French schools.

In the run-up to the invasion of Iraq a new conversation opened up in Europe between Muslim organizations and the traditional groupings of the left-trade unionists, feminists, peace campaigners and environmentalists, antiglobalization activists, the remnants of the old left sects. The relationship is new and raw, and mistrust on both sides runs deep. Privately, many on the secular left suspect Muslims of bringing in a faith-based, culturally conservative agenda and perhaps of giving cover to fundamentalism; Muslims often feel too beleaguered to reveal the discussions inside their own communities. Salma Yaqoob, chair of the Stop the War Coalition in Birmingham, was at the heart of the debates in Britain's antiwar movement, and says it has been a very positive experience. Elsewhere, though, it has been more difficult, "If we're not engaged, people say, What's going on inside this community? Why is it so closed? If we do get involved, people say, What kind of alliance is this? and accuse us of collaborating with the fundamentalists.... Many Muslims now feel that their place in Britain is at stake. They are so scared, they don't even want to speak among themselves."

Islam is part of Europe, historically as well as demographically. It is also the Other against which Europe has defined itself, at least since the Crusades. If the "Muslim problem" is not to become Europe's new "Jewish question," that thorny conversation has to be continued and expanded, openly and without censorship on either side.

MARIA MARGARONIS

Maria Margaronis writes from The Nation*'s London bureau.*

Profiles in Legal Courage

Attorney General John Ashcroft has never been one to hide his anger under a bushel. On November 12, just three days after he announced his resignation, Ashcroft lashed out at what he called "excessive judicial encroachment on functions assigned to the President" in the "war on terrorism." His immediate target was plainly Judge James Robertson, who four days earlier had halted the military tribunals in Guantánamo Bay, ruling that they violated both international and federal law. But Ashcroft's real beef is with the Supreme Court, which in June had set the stage for Judge Robertson's opinion by declaring that the President's powers to detain "the enemy" must be limited by the rule of law, articulated and enforced by courts.

The most important legacy of the Supreme Court's enemy combatant decisions may be the renewed willingness of judges to stand up to the likes of Ashcroft and his successors. The High Court rulings have already been succeeded by a trio of courageous lower court decisions rejecting the executive's claims that it is above the law when fighting terrorism.

In September Victor Marrero, a federal district court judge in New York, held unconstitutional a Patriot Act provision that authorizes the FBI to obtain information on subscribers to Internet services from the service provider by issuing a national security letter, or NSL. Under the law, the FBI need not get judicial approval to issue an NSL and need not have probable cause to believe that it will uncover evidence of a crime. Most troubling, the law imposed a gag rule barring recipients of NSLs from telling anyone—including a lawyer or a court—that they had received such a request, thereby precluding any chance for judicial review.

Indeed, to challenge the law, an Internet service provider first had to violate the gag rule to seek the advice of the ACLU, and then had to violate the rule again to file suit in court. The case was filed under seal, and its very existence could not be made public until the court so ordered. Even now the identity of the plaintiff is classified, and the case is designated only *Doe v. Ashcroft*. Judge Marrero held the law unconstitutional because by precluding judicial review, it places the executive branch above the law.

In October a federal judge in Washington followed suit, ordering that three long-term detainees in Guantánamo be given access to their attorneys. Their attorneys filed the successful lawsuit in the Supreme Court this past summer establishing that Guantánamo prisoners have a right to seek federal court review of the legality of their detention. But the government had continued to insist that the detainees be denied any contact with their lawyers. Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly rejected that argument, reasoning that in order for the three to have a fair opportunity to make their

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case in federal court, they needed the assistance of lawyers. Here, too, the court's bottom line was that by barring effective review, the executive's position would have placed the President above the law.

Judge Robertson's decision on November 8 in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* similarly emphasized the importance of legal process to check unilateral executive action. Robertson ruled that the military tribunal process violated both the Geneva Conventions and federal statutes. The Geneva Conventions expressly bar the use of military tribunals to try prisoners of war and require that detainees be treated as prisoners of war until a "competent tribunal" has found otherwise. George W. Bush has unilaterally declared that all alleged Al Qaeda members are not prisoners of war, but as Judge Robertson noted, "the President is not a 'tribunal.'" More significant, Judge Robertson ruled that the provisions permitting secret evidence to be used to convict (and even execute) defendants in military tribunals cannot be squared with federal law requiring military tribunal procedures to be consistent with those provided our own soldiers in military courts-martial.

Together these decisions insist that executive action depriving human beings of their liberty or privacy must be subject to the rule of law, which in turn requires fair process and meaningful access to courts. In that regard, they echo the Supreme Court's message last summer that "a state of war is not a blank check." John Ashcroft may not like being second-guessed, but if the rule of law means anything, courts must have the power to assess the legality of executive actions impinging on basic freedoms. Fulfilling that role is not encroachment. It's a judge's solemn responsibility.

DAVID COLE

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The Bush AIDS Machine

Four more years of AIDS under George W. Bush doesn't add up to four more years of complacency and denial, as it did when Ronald Reagan won re-election in 1984. That's because midway through his first term Bush did something Reagan never dreamed of: He made AIDS his own. No more tawdry talk of gay men and drug users, condoms and clean needles; by abandoning the domestic for the international, Bush rewrote AIDS as a story about orphans, abstinence and faith. Unilateralism, corporatism—Bush found a home for these first principles, too, in his $15 billion global AIDS initiative, which is US-run and Pharma-friendly.

The Bush Administration's AIDS conservatism has been on vivid display in its attacks on the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, which it has sought to undermine, preferring its own, US-owned and -operated vehicle. In September, several top US AIDS officials, including global health adviser and Bush family friend Bill Steiger, held a briefing on Capitol Hill at which they charged that the fund was descending into chaos. This set the tone for final deliberations by Republican leaders in Congress over the government's 2005 contribution to the fund, slated for a $200 million cut. US diplomats even lobbied the fund's board members to vote against launching a new round of grants in 2005 at its mid-November board meeting. This, just as the UN announced that the number of HIV-infected has reached 39 million worldwide.

These developments are ominous for several reasons, not least that the fund is active in 127 countries, while Bush's global AIDS initiative serves only fifteen. The fund supports country-driven approaches, which depend on generic drugs for treatment and sometimes include needle-exchange programs for drug users, safer sex education for sex workers and condom promotion in the general population, all of which are either discouraged or banned in Bush's plan. Bush's grants favor faith-based programs, and while his first round of grants supported more mainstream religious charities like World Vision, a new $100 million round of international abstinence grants—announced in October—went to such Christian right groups as Samaritan's Purse. That relief organization, headed by the Rev. Franklin Graham (who called Islam an "evil" religion), was censured just three years ago for proselytizing while using a USAID grant to assist Salvadoran earthquake victims. At a Christian AIDS conference in February 2002 (attended by USAID officials), Graham indicated that he'd bring the same approach to HIV prevention, declaring, "Only a massive societal change in behavior can stop the spread of AIDS, and only Jesus Christ can bring about this change."

At home, two leading conservative AIDS ideologues are poised to join the Senate. Jim DeMint of South Carolina is one of a gang of ultraconservatives in Congress who brought intimidation to the AIDS field. A favorite tactic: poison-pen letters, like one demanding a financial investigation into AIDS groups that protested during Health Secretary Tommy Thompson's speech at an international AIDS conference, and another threatening to defund an organization doing international HIV prevention because the group holds the patent on RU-486. Senator-elect Tom Coburn is a former Congressman from Oklahoma who made his name pushing for the criminalization of HIV transmission and for warning labels on condoms. He most recently served as co-chairman of Bush's presidential AIDS council, a platform he used to advocate abstinence education and make antigay remarks. Coburn's council issued nary a peep when some 200 community-based HIV-prevention groups (several serving gay men) were defunded this past June, and when the Ryan White CARE Act was denied a budget increase by Congress.

Meanwhile, Bush's neglect of the domestic epidemic has borne fruit. New data show that the government is set to fail at its 2001 goal to cut new domestic HIV infections in half by 2005. Far from declining, HIV infections plateaued at 40,000 a year during 2002 and 2003; this year, documented HIV diagnoses actually rose. Could we be seeing the impact of Bush's disinvestment in proven approaches to HIV prevention, while hundreds of millions go to abstinence-only programs that can mention condoms only in terms of their failure rates? On the treatment front, in May an Institute of Medicine report calculated that tens of thousands of Americans living with HIV aren't getting needed treatment—the result of state cuts to Medicaid and the chronic flat funding of the Ryan White Act.

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COMMENT

A climate of fear now prevails among AIDS service organizations, most of which depend on government grants to offer HIV prevention and care. Many have been the targets of punitive financial investigations under Bush; all now face a censorious new approval process for sexually explicit prevention materials. At the moment, most AIDS lobbyists are hoping only to hold the line in the years ahead: to get Ryan White reauthorized without significant cuts, to keep cash flowing to the Global Fund, to stave off increases to the abstinence-only pot.

Will they shake off their fear and engage in a resurgent AIDS activism? Perhaps. Their hand will certainly be strengthened if African leaders publicly protest the "morality"-based strictures attached to Bush's largesse; if people with AIDS in red states start to raise their voices when they're cut off from care; and if the media pick up on mounting scientific evidence that virginity programs actually put youth at risk for STDs. It will take a series of eruptions like these to rattle the new Republican AIDS machine.

ESTHER KAPLAN

Esther Kaplan is the author of With God on Their Side: How Christian Fundamentalists Trampled Science, Policy, and Democracy in George W. Bush's White House *(New Press)*.

Defunct Economists

Professor Paul Samuelson's *Economics: An Introductory Analysis* has been the bestselling college economics textbook for more than fifty years. Many of his brightest students went on to important positions in business, finance and government policy-making. Some became influential economists themselves and spread the faith further. "I don't care who writes a nation's laws—or crafts its advanced treaties—if I can write its economics textbooks," the author once boasted.

Now comes Professor Samuelson, age 89, to announce an important correction. Free trade, he explains, may not be win-win, after all. In certain circumstances, when a very poor but ambitious nation is trading with a wealthy advanced economy, free trade can turn into a very ugly loser for the wealthy country—inflicting permanent economic loss, stagnant wages, greater inequality and other hurtful consequences. The professor's reasoning is expressed in the abstract language of orthodox economics, but he does name the two countries he has in mind—the United States and China. His paper, published in the Summer issue of the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, bears the lighthearted title, "Where Ricardo and Mill Rebut and Confirm Arguments of Mainstream Economists Supporting Globalization."

Samuelson's announced purpose is to correct the sloppy thinking of leading economists (including some of his former grad students). He scolds them for promoting "popular polemical untruth" to defend globalization against those Luddite anti-globalization protesters in the streets, who turn out to be not entirely wrong.

Free trade, the professor elaborates, will deliver real gains to both rich and poor nations in the initial stages, but this can change dramatically as the poorer nation (think China) begins to acquire the technological capabilities to innovate and improve its productivity—in other words, become more like the advanced economy (that's us). Act II, as he calls it, "deals some weighty blows against economists' oversimple complacencies about globalization.... This invention abroad that gives China some of the comparative advantage that had belonged to the United States can induce for the United States permanent *lost* per capita real income."

Alas, he points out, the US losses will not likely be shared equitably. "Some Americans (capitalists and skilled computer experts) may be being helped by what is decimating the real free-trade wage rates of the semi-skilled or of the blue-collar factory workers," he observes. Thus, the country may experience growing income inequality. When the process "harms a really sizeable fraction of the future US population," Samuelson suggests, the winners could be made to transfer some of their gains to the losers. Yet this remedy is most unlikely, he concedes, since the same leading economists (he cites Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan) cheering for globalization also oppose any such equity measures as inefficient. "Marie Antoinette said, 'Let them eat cake,'" Samuelson recalls. "But history records no transfer of sugar and flour for her peasant subjects."

In some quarters, Samuelson is being celebrated for brave truth-telling, but the better question is: What took him so long? His elegant equations are, after all, merely confirming belatedly what is already visible. US hourly wages, discounted for inflation, have been stagnant for thirty years! The gross and growing inequalities he foresees in America have already occurred. China's smart efforts to become a first-class economy of advanced production are visibly succeeding (aided by capital and technology transfers from US multinational corporations). And America's lost manufacturing capacity is reflected in the staggering US trade deficits and the many billions China and Japan must keep lending us so we can keep buying their stuff. Not only the rich nations will suffer. Mexico, where US jobs in clothing and electronics were relocated, is now losing those jobs to China.

The abstracted models worked out by economic scholars, most notably Samuelson, leave out the complexities of human existence—politics, society, culture, history, irrational greed. If one wants to understand China's energetic rise in the global system, read the economic history of the United States. The Chinese evidently did, and borrowed some pointers, as the Japanese did before them. Dr. Samuelson's learned observations have already been trumped by empirical reality—indeed mocked by the economic history of the past three decades. His attempt at drollery is intended, I suspect, to conceal a sense of error and regret, possibly guilt. His acolytes, he must know, are still running things according to what he taught them, oblivious to nondoctrinal facts and still dispensing failed wisdom to the masses. Not only economists but policy-makers and politicians, reporters and editors at major media—they all drank the Kool-Aid.

The mindless conformity of elite opinion was long ago observed in John Maynard Keynes's famous dictum: "Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist."

WILLIAM GREIDER

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The War That Never Was

RUSSELL JACOBY

THE BULLET'S SONG: Romantic Violence and Utopia.
By William Pfaff.
Simon & Schuster. 368 pp. $27.95.

As war threatened Europe in the 1930s, a physicist turned to a psychiatrist to help understand the impending violence. Albert Einstein wrote to Sigmund Freud because "the normal objective of my thought affords no insight into the dark places of human will and feeling." Einstein recognized that the machinations of a small group of men partially explain a penchant for war. The men who control the industries, the press and the church gain wealth and power by war. What he could not understand was how the majority, which had so much to lose, succumbed to their ploys so easily. "How is it," he asks, "that these devices succeed so well in rousing men to such wild enthusiasm, even to sacrifice their lives?"

The question is a good one. The *locus classicus* is World War I, a war that initially unleashed general fervor. "There were parades in the street, flags, ribbons and music burst forth everywhere," recalls Stefan Zweig in his memoir, *The World of Yesterday*. "Young recruits were marching triumphantly, their faces lighting up at the cheering—they, the John Does and Richard Roes who usually go unnoticed and uncelebrated." Yet the John Does and Richard Roes died unnoticed and en masse. American deaths in the Vietnam War ran almost 60,000 over nine years; the British suffered those losses in two *weeks* in World War I. In one especially ferocious (and pointless) battle at Passchendaele, British and Germans killed each other at the rate of 5,000 a day for three months, with a total death count of half a million. And yet some soldiers, for instance a corporal named Adolf Hitler, emerged from the violence entranced by war.

The new book by the Paris-based American journalist William Pfaff, who writes widely and sensibly about foreign affairs, bounces off and around World War I, which he views as the decisive event of modern times. He offers a loose series of reflections, mini-biographies and autobiographical snippets that center on war, violence, utopia and ethics. Pfaff is trying to put his finger on a fundamental shift initiated by World War I, what he calls variously the decline of chivalry and virtue, the end of heroism and the rise of romantic or utopian violence. To get at these topics he focuses on a series of individuals, most notably T.E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia"); Ernst Jünger, the German writer perhaps best-known in English for his World War I diary, *Storm of Steel*; Gabriele D'Annunzio, the nationalist Italian poet and writer, who like Jünger had fascist affinities; Willi Münzenberg, the Communist propagandist; André Malraux, the leftist French novelist who ended up in de Gaulle's government; Arthur Koestler, the Hungarian-English writer, ex-Communist and autobiographer; plus a few other figures both well-known—like Simone Weil, the French philosopher—and little-known, like Vladimir Peniakoff, a Russian-British soldier.

Pfaff views World War I as the decisive event of modern times, responsible for the decline of chivalry and the rise of 'romantic violence.'

For Pfaff these figures all exemplify something about twentieth-century violence and the eclipse of chivalry and heroism. World War I inaugurated a nihilism that caused men to seek codes of "individual transcendence" or "utopias based on historical fictions." His protagonists were not major political figures, but they expose "the inner history of the modern crisis." He explains that "my individuals all saw in vio-

Russell Jacoby, who teaches history at UCLA, is the author of The Last Intellectuals, Dialectic of Defeat *and other works. His new book,* Picture Imperfect: Utopian Thought for an Anti-Utopian Age, *will be published in the spring by Columbia University Press.*

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lence or its intellectual counterpart, manipulation, means to redemptive political change and the possibility to impose through action as well as art *significant form* upon historical materials and experience." Moreover, these people repudiate "tragedy," which imposes limits on individual and political life. "The effort to deny tragedy was among the fundamental factors responsible for what happened in the twentieth century. Utopianism defies tragedy—and fails." By examining these selected writers, Pfaff hopes to illuminate a critical movement from virtuous restraint to utopian violence.

Pfaff is a thoughtful observer, but his lax terms lead him astray. He makes no distinction between violence and manipulation, or between political action and art. How are his various themes, such as chivalry and tragedy, linked? What is utopian violence, and how does it differ from nonutopian violence? How does the "denial" of tragedy lead to violence? What is virtue and how can it rise or fall in a society? Pfaff makes a point here and there, but he stitches together his varied cloths with the threads of existentialism. "My book," he tell us, deals with those who are "in flight from the reality of the human predicament." Even if Pfaff knew or told us about the "reality of the human predicament," this statement still covers too much ground.

From the beginning Pfaff is vague about chronology and cause and effect or, at least, about what value to assign to each. Did World War I bury the idea of heroism and is the world poorer for it? Or is it the opposite, and World War I unleashed a heroism that threatened (and threatens) the world? Pfaff seems to argue both. World War I, he writes, "put an end" to heroism. Yet his opening chapter surveys Futurism, the Italian art movement that predates the war and links up with Mussolini's Fascism after the war. While Futurism hardly offered a coherent ideology, it did champion the hero and heroic act—as did Fascism generally. In *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* the historian George Mosse persuasively argues that World War I instigated a cult of the hero.

The same haziness dogs Pfaff's chapter on T.E. Lawrence. As author of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and as a mythological and self-mythologizing figure in the Arab Revolt of World War I, did Lawrence represent the past or the future? Pfaff has it both ways. Lawrence represented a type "that was shortly to be eliminated from history," a hero who believed in "rectitude, honor, and chastity." Yet as Pfaff knows, Lawrence hardly fit that type, if it ever existed. Thirty pages later he is wondering about Lawrence's "shadows," "political ambiguity" and actions in the Middle East. The "glamour" he bestowed on his deeds "contributed to the destruction of the limits on warfare that were generally respected in his time." Pfaff notes that "people have naturally associated [Lawrence] with the Fascists."

Did World War I bury the idea of heroism, or did it unleash a heroism that still threatens the world? Pfaff seems to argue both.

How do these things go together—Lawrence as the last chivalrous hero of World War I and Lawrence as a menacing figure of the future? Pfaff does not say. Instead he ties these observations together with boilerplate phrases; he concludes that Lawrence lived "in a cleft in the twentieth century" and was a "chivalric Edwardian" caught by "modern forces: of nationalism, liberation movements, and even protototalitarian mass politics."

While the first half of *The Bullet's Song* addresses chivalry, the second takes up utopia. Here Pfaff's argument is more conventional. He believes that in its leftist and rightist forms the "idea of total and redemptive transformation of human society through political means" has bedeviled the twentieth century. As in the rest of the book, Pfaff sketches out the lives of selected individuals but then does not know what to do with them. His biographical vignettes and general observations hardly touch. He summarizes the career of Koestler but comes to no conclusion. Nor does he do better with Malraux, whose overrated novels and political hat changes rankle Pfaff. Yet his irritation does not generate insight about utopian totalitarianism. He concludes that Malraux was fundamentally an "aesthete," who moved from Trotskyism to Gaullism but always remained "his own man." He closes by intoning that Malraux was "a crucial contributor to that confusion of self-aggrandizing fantasy with reality which distinguished the history of the mid-decades of the twentieth century."

Once again Pfaff's language indicates a problem. "Self-aggrandizing fantasy" fits a bevy of intellectuals and politicians, from a Roman emperor (Nero) to a secretary of state (Henry Kissinger) and beyond. And what does this have to do with chivalry? Apparently nothing; Pfaff never returns to the subject. His opening sentence to his conclusion lets the cat out of the bag—only there is no cat. "I have been concerned with a particular historical setting, the twentieth century, and with the choices and experiences of certain individuals whose personal histories perhaps tell us more than we have previously understood about the nature of the century, and its implied consequences for the century following, in which we now live." That we now live in the twentieth-first century is a valuable point, but this long-winded sentence suggests that Pfaff has lost his way.

If there is a center to this book, it is a conviction about the decline of virtue and virtuous professions. Pfaff believes that once upon a time people entered the army and the church in the name of virtue. The professional soldier and monk incarnate instances of "lives lived for virtue." Each is linked to "a moral order now largely abandoned." Evidently the monkish professions are in decline, but is soldiering? Pfaff seems to think that contemporary soldiers lack the ethical sense of earlier fighters, who were driven by neither ideology nor economics. He indicts "utopian" violence, but treasures old-fashioned military killing. "The moral function of war is to recall humans to the reality at the core of existence: the violence that is part of our nature." Utopians apparently deny this salutary truth.

When and where was this marvelous violence? Pfaff does not say. Was it when 13,000 Confederate soldiers walked into Union cannons at the battle of Gettysburg? Or the destruction of Tenochtitlán, the Aztec capital that was equal or larger to most sixteenth-century European cities, by Cortés and his soldiers? Victor Davis Hanson in his recent *Carnage and Culture* lauds the "lethal Western military tradition" that underlay Cortés's successful slaughter. Is this Pfaff's chivalrous soldiering? Pfaff believes World War I ended a virtuous violence that may never have existed.

Pfaff himself stems from a military family and retains more than a little nostalgia for the army. He put on a uniform, he tells us, at the age of 14 in high school Reserve Office Training Corps and kept it on for more than fifteen years; he went to Korea as a "rifleman volunteer" and later was part of the US Army Special Forces. It is too bad Pfaff does not say more about his experiences, which might anchor, if not restrain, his windy declamations about "tragedy," "virtue" and "chivalry." His book is surpris-

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ingly murky, given that Pfaff often writes astringent columns about foreign affairs. He has been a sharp critic, for instance, of America's Iraq misadventure. Indeed, it is difficult to square the homiletic call for virtue as the answer to the "human predicament," with which he ends the book, with his hard-boiled foreign policy columns. Perhaps there are two Pfaffs. One hones the blade of the independent journalist and the other succumbs to the self-aggrandizing fantasy of the philosopher. ■

Body Heat

MARK LOTTO

VILLAGES. By John Updike. Knopf. 321 pp. $25.

After the Kinsey Report but before the first *Penthouse* Forum, John Updike wrote, "He kneels in a kind of sickness between her spread legs. With her help their blind loins fit." That's Rabbit, while running; after a pickup game of hoops, he will pick up a girl, to diddle and almost destroy. Anyway, Rabbit hops on, and off, or rather: "they make love, in morning light with cloudy mouths." In the four decades since *Rabbit, Run*, Updike has labored, like Professor Murray on the *Oxford English*, to assemble the definitive thesaurus of all things carnal and knowledgeable. It would be impolite to inquire too much about his field research and working methods, but you can be sure he's paid equal attention to the graffiti in bathroom stalls, Byron's *Don Juan* and the wild, precise nonsense people sigh mid-screw. To "cloudy mouths" and mythological "loins," Updike adds, in *Villages*, "heavenly invasion," "nipples like rabbit noses" and "whimpering, finger-sucking dissolution," not to mention what Owen, our hero, thinks looking down at his lover from behind: "This is the neck the executioner sees."

Updike cranks out a lot of books. *Villages* is his twenty-first novel, which is impressive even if you don't count the many short stories and essays in *The New Yorker*, the children's books and poetry collections, the writings on golf and the play where President Buchanan splits hairs, falls short and dies. Elizabeth Hardwick once called Updike "as productive of print as a Victorian" and his body of work "a promiscuous, astonishing span." Among the various novels, there is one in which Updike founds and then overthrows his own African nation; in another he conjures up weird witchy sisters and they conjure up thunderstorms, love charms and cancer. Then, once a decade, Updike runs back to Rabbit, like a movie star returning to a surefire franchise.

Between *Rabbit*s, Updike mostly putters around small-town New England. For him, it still provides the very best laboratory conditions for testing what erects penises and topples families. After all, in Updike's villages, dentists and homemakers, wine-light and lousy, believe they're bantering as wittily as Benedick and Beatrice, or Hudson and Day; post-Pill, every pot-luck threatens to turn into an orgy. So with the special care of a model train enthusiast, Updike will lay down in well-tended sentences his miniature scenery of quaintly crumbling barns and white-steepled churches, fixer-upper farmhouses and newsstands that reliably stock the Sunday *Times*. And then he'll install parks with secret picnic spots, houses with always-empty guest rooms and inconspicuous motels at the edge of town. Plenty of hiding places for neighbors (not married to one another), insufficiently alibi'd, pants down, skirts up, as they—well, I'll leave the specifics to him.

Villages, Updike's latest, is a *Bildungsroman* chronicling the life and times of Owen Mackenzie, as he grows from his making-ends-meet childhood during the Depression to the comfortable retirement of a software designer who bought and sold Apple stock at exactly the right time. Throughout the novel, his sentimental education is supervised by a hands-on faculty of tomboys, crushes, mistresses, one-night stands and, of course, his two wives: first, insulated, always unattainable Phyllis, that "beautiful math major"; then, "small, dense-bodied" Julia, whom he wins away from the local Episcopalian minister, a woman who finally teaches him uxoriousness and the pleasures of keeping it in his pants, whom he grows old with and will be buried beside.

Nothing much happens in *Villages*. Seventy-year-old Owen awakens one morning from a dream of either necrophilia or creepy, naked CPR, only to find his wife Julia not dead but already downstairs, putting on a pot of coffee. As he ambles barefoot to the bathroom, hollering pleasantries in the general direction of the kitchen, he remembers a lifetime of things we've already read about in some other, better Updike novel, or Updike's memoirs, or his author's blurb. Yet again an only child is born, like Updike, to practical parents in rural Pennsylvania. Yet again he goes off to school in Boston, marries young, moves to New York, leaves New York for New England, has four kids, fucks his wife, fucks his wife's friends and all his friends' wives, golfs, leaves the wife, marries again, moves again. *Villages* sometimes feels as depleted as an overdrawn bank account.

To be fair, Owen goes off to MIT, not Harvard like Updike, and spends his days writing binary code instead of astonishingly good and sometimes just astonishingly well-received novels. This gives Updike the opportunity to show off his knowledge of Riemann surfaces and set theory, programming code and primitive light-pen plotting, the history of the computer mouse and the number of vacuum tubes (49,000) in an IBM as big as a blue whale. Updike makes acronyms like SABRE and COBOL buzz as musically as bees, but he never gets the microprocessor or the web browser to reveal anything particularly meaningful about, say, the faulty wiring of the twentieth century. Nor does a punch line that finishes "in a world full of plugs, nature must provide sockets" tell us anything new about our bodies or our circuitry or even about left-brained Owen, who cracks the joke. In the end, all the minutiae about computers and mathematics feels as if it were imposed on Owen, like the display jewelry hanging off a mannequin—accessorized instead of fully imagined.

But really all anybody wants to hear about is the sex: what sort and with whom. Now, for those people in the bookstore aisles flipping through *Villages* looking for the good stuff, Updike has helpfully confined most of the Sixth Commandment–breaking to a series of chapters titled "Village Sex." Bookstore skimmers will, however, be disappointed to discover that the dirty parts aren't that dirty. Yes, when at the end of Owen's life he remembers his lovers, he remembers them only abstracted into their orgasms. Vanessa: "something brisk, even dismissive, in her way of seizing it." Faye: "an infectious, in-

Mark Lotto, a former Nation *intern, is a writer for the* New York Observer.

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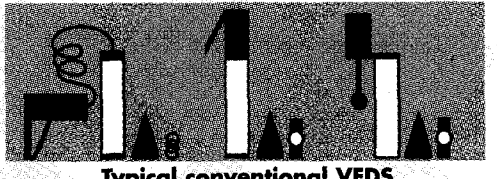

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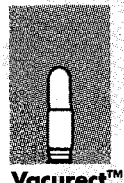

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nocent gaiety that made her easy to love." Karen: "no big deal, like a coffee break or a spasm of exertion after sitting too long on an airplane." But to get them off, there's no too-literal animal husbandry, no ménages of more than two, and nobody needs to get on the phone to report something new to the people at the Kama Sutra. Wives aren't even swapped; they are just coveted, borrowed or stolen away. How old-fashioned.

I should probably admit that I'm too young to worry about Eisenhower voters, and whatever it is they snuck away from the party to do; after all, Updike opened and emptied this can of worms a long time ago. When he was himself a young man, Updike wrote that J.D. Salinger indulged in too much "vehement editorializing on the obvious." Nowadays, this same charge, slightly modified, can be leveled against Updike: In *Villages*, as in so much of his later work, there is altogether too much vehement poeticizing of the obvious. Maybe that's the byproduct of the high-gloss nostalgia with which Owen and other Updike heroes look back upon their lives. Maybe it's because Updike, without anything new to say, is scrambling to find new-ish expressions for all his usual ideas about sex and suburbia, men and women, life and death. But he seems to vet his language only for its technically proficient beauty rather than its capacity to reveal subjects accurately or meaningfully; so characters are covered over by a patina of things they wouldn't think and words they wouldn't say; everything else, from hair styles to swimming pools to programming code to telephones, is made to seem equally luminous, equally lovely.

Here, for instance, is a preposterously fine trip to the kitchen for a snack: "To bring them, after a while, something to eat or drink, she would wander naked through the winter-bright rooms, like a deer at home in the camouflaging forest." Of course, for some readers that passage will only provide further proof that Updike is a stylist without rival, that every line has its perfect and precise architecture, and that every two words he puts side by side make a little poem; the way people carry on about him, you would think Updike was the first American since Whitman to write a pretty sentence.

By the end of the novel, Updike will claim to have shown us the ways that villages "moderate" the madness of living, and "protect us from the darkness without and the darkness within." But his sense of what's secret, and why, is nowadays too small to unsettle or even surprise us. It's always the same with him, and always too convenient: Everywhere he looks, behind every door he opens and every window he puritanically peeps in, he finds yet another consensually coital couple. After a while, Updike just starts to seem like a dirty cop who plants the evidence and then heads right to where he knows he will find it.

Besides, after decades of fucking and wondering about fucking, all he comes up with is this:

> Sex is a programmed delirium that rolls back death with death's own substance; it is the black space between the stars given sweet substance in our veins and crevices. The parts of ourselves conventional decency calls shameful are exalted. We are told that we shine, that we are splendid, and the naked bodies we were given in the bloody moment of birth hold all the answers that another, the other, desires, now and forever.

There is less here than you might think, which becomes apparent if you look past a prose as professional and rich as the frosting on a wedding cake. Indeed, annihilative, blissful sex may be our best consolation against, and distraction from, our personal insecurities, our religious beliefs and, most important, our own impending deaths. But it's hardly the bold summation that befits an admirable career and lifelong obsession, and it is certainly not, by any stretch of the imagination, an original or particularly profound insight.

It's funny, then, that Owen's first father-in-law, the professor of the English Renaissance with the "shy slouch" and chuckle like "the snap of dried glue in an old binding," mentions Shakespeare and Bacon but suspiciously says not one word about Andrew Marvell. And yet we suspect that before some seduction Updike once read aloud or had read to him Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress," which imagines our graves, where "none, I think, do there embrace." The poem's a pickup line, but funny, horrible. It's also *Villages*, but shorter, better. So:

> Now let us sport us while we may,
> And now, like amorous birds of prey,
> Rather at once our time devour
> Than languish in his slow-chapt power. ■

False Promises

JENNIFER EGAN

AMERICAN DREAM: Three Women, Ten Kids, and a Nation's Drive to End Welfare.
By Jason DeParle. Viking. 422 pp. $25.95.

In *American Dream*, his masterful new book about welfare reform, Jason DeParle brings together two groups of people who rarely seem to meet: welfare policy-makers and welfare recipients. The result is every bit the exhaustive and authoritative account we might expect from a *New York Times* reporter whose welfare coverage during the Clinton years twice made him a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. What's startling is the gripping read DeParle provides along the way—an alchemy wrought by the fusion of his encyclopedic knowledge with his mischievous prose. The story of welfare reform turns out to be suspenseful, emotionally rich, rife with dramatic reversals and packed with enough ironies to keep Don DeLillo busy for several years. Who knew?

DeParle's method is similar to Nicholas Lemann's in his classic study of African-American migration, *The Promised Land* (a book DeParle draws on, along with Carol Stack's *All Our Kin*, Mickey Kaus's *The End of Equality* and many others). He follows both the lives of ordinary people and the process of Washington decision-making to the points where they intersect. While his long-term observation of poor families is reminiscent of Adrian Nicole Leblanc's *Random Family*, his equally close attention to the actions and motivations of policy-makers provides a welcome layer of analysis.

The ordinary people in *American Dream* are Angie Jobe, Jewell Reed and Opal Caples, three African-American single mothers and longtime welfare recipients, related by blood or marriage, who moved from Chicago to Milwaukee in 1991 to avail themselves of Wisconsin's generous wel-

Jennifer Egan has just begun a Mel and Lois Tuckman Fellowship at the New York Public Library's Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers.

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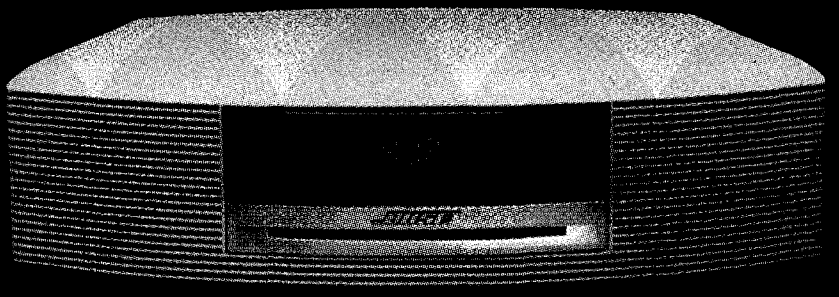

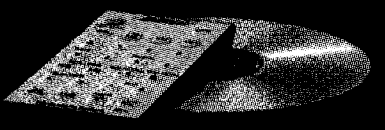

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fare payouts. DeParle spent time with these women and their children over the years when the Clinton welfare laws were taking effect and Wisconsin was transformed by Tommy Thompson, its ambitious (and, as portrayed here, ferociously self-interested) governor, from a haven of handouts to the epicenter of rollbacks. DeParle meticulously traces the women's histories, which follow similar, and typical, trajectories. Descended from sharecroppers, raised in the 1960s and '70s by hardworking single mothers in failing Chicago neighborhoods, they succumbed to the pressures of their environment: truncated education, early pregnancy and drugs—the fathers of Angie and Jewell's children, both drug dealers, are serving long sentences, and Opal became addicted to crack in her 20s. All three worked intermittently while on welfare, but had little incentive to make coherent plans. Angie, the most enterprising of the bunch, was actually a postal employee while on the rolls. "Angie usually says her postal career ended with a layoff, a version she half believes. In truth, she quit," writes DeParle, whose compassion for his subjects never leads him to become their apologist. After summarizing Angie's complaints about the job, he concludes: "She also quit because she could: she had a welfare check.... Angie was still stuck, and the welfare system let her stay that way."

Meanwhile, in Washington, the welfare reform bill was making a lurching, picaresque journey from a slogan without a policy (Clinton's campaign promise to "end welfare as we know it" was little more than a line dreamed up by his campaign speechwriter) to a cataclysm in social policy. Candidate Clinton had originally described his reform plan as a federally run program to provide the poor with training, education and community-service jobs, but its essential vagueness allowed both conservatives and liberals to embrace it. After taking office, Clinton inexplicably lost interest in welfare reform, leaving a vacuum that was quickly filled by Republicans eager to reclaim an issue they felt he'd stolen from them. In the hands of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a more stringent bill than anything Clinton had fathomed began to take shape. "Gingrich set the old arguments on their head," DeParle writes. "While Reagan attacked poor people for abusing the programs, Gingrich attacked programs for abusing the poor... he reminded the public that poor children were suffering and said welfare was to blame.... When I noted the change in tactics, Gingrich responded with the smile of a man well-pleased with his cleverness. 'Congratulations!' he said. 'You cracked the code!' The rhetoric did more than soften the message. It created a logic for deeper cuts: The less we spend, the more we care!"

By the time Clinton finally signed a welfare bill, in 1996, it had been transformed into a program run at the discretion of the states with fixed federal funding and "hard" time limits of five years. Its architects cast themselves as emancipators of the poor, while its detractors, led by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, warned that children would be "sleeping on grates." DeParle then shifts his narrative back to his subjects in Wisconsin, where welfare czar-to-be Jason Turner was concocting his own brand of reform, requiring that applicants attend several weeks of motivation class and then show up for a workfare job, or else lose their benefits.

DeParle traces the picaresque journey of Clinton's welfare reform bill from a slogan without a policy to a cataclysm in social policy.

Watching the impact of Turner's policies on Angie and Jewell does a lot to explain the staggering national drop in welfare rolls that followed. Angie received one of Turner's work notices and found a job two weeks later in a large nursing home, commencing what might loosely be called her career in caring for the elderly. Over the next many years, she has worked long hours, double shifts, piggybacked more than one job into her day and has never received another welfare check. Jewell signed up for a course to become a nursing aide and also soon found a job. Having moved quickly off the rolls and into work, Angie and Jewell exemplify welfare reform's statistical success—in Milwaukee, the rolls dropped 66 percent in two years, before the transition to Turner's program was even complete. But the quality of Angie and Jewell's lives changed very little: Though they were slightly better off financially—mostly because of the earned-income tax credit passed by Clinton—their low-wage jobs keep them teetering near the poverty line. Both women struggle to keep the lights on and food on the table. Angie's endless workdays and double shifts left her with much less time for her children, whose lives to date suggest a future little different from her own. Her oldest child, Kesha, got pregnant at 16. A son, Redd, dropped out of school in ninth grade and was contemplating becoming a drug dealer.

Opal, who had been addicted to crack for many years by 1996, presented a much tougher case than Angie or Jewell. Turner's plan called for an ambitious system of aid for families like Opal's who lingered on the rolls: While still requiring that everyone work, it would create thousands of community-service jobs and provide child- and healthcare. Five agencies administered Wisconsin Works, or W-2, in Milwaukee, each handling different city districts. As described by DeParle, their performance was scandalous; for all their tough talk about work requirements, they did precious little to train or employ clients. What they mostly did was send them welfare checks. Nonsensical as this might seem, there was a simple explanation: money. Not having expected the rolls to plummet as they did, Wisconsin had budgeted for more than double the number of cases than actually existed by the time W-2 was up and running. Already awash in surplus funds they'd done nothing to earn, the agencies charged with administering W-2 had little incentive to do the hard work of easing troubled families off the rolls and into independence. In other words, cash handouts stymied the welfare-fixers into idleness.

But the corruption went deeper than inaction and neglect: Because there were caps imposed on the profits these contractors were allowed to make, they indulged in orgies of gratuitous spending. DeParle devotes a portion of his book to Maximus, Inc., a for-profit corporation that traded on the New York Stock Exchange and had a particular knack for making headlines and grabbing high-profile contracts. And no wonder—the company spent $1.1 million on a marketing campaign while a mere 8 percent of its Milwaukee clients were working. DeParle's devastating exposé of the nonsense and weirdness at Maximus gives Joseph Heller a run for his money. Opal's fate exposes the human toll exacted by the incompetence and greed of corporations that rode the gravy train of welfare reform: Pregnant and living in a crack house, she enjoyed an uninterrupted stream of welfare checks that continued even after a Maximus worker paid a visit to her "residence." With no financial incentive to control her habit, she wound up losing everything: her children, family ties and finally even her welfare check. When DeParle last heard from her, she was homeless.

What emerges from this volume is a nuanced portrait of welfare reform. The

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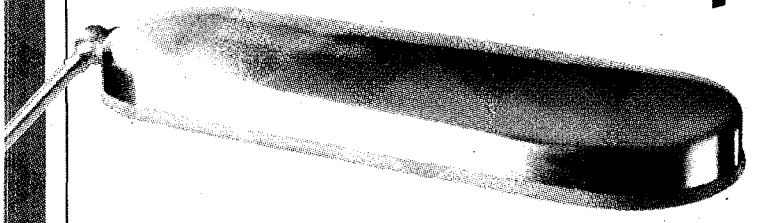

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doomsayers, mercifully, were wrong—the falling rolls, which far outpaced predictions, never ushered in widespread crisis or chaos. Strong, able women like Angie and Jewell are less likely to depend on the government for their families' livelihoods, and Angie, particularly, takes pride and pleasure in her work. But minimum-wage labor offers little in terms of comfort or stability, so the "freedom" touted by workfare's proponents would seem to have been mostly projection. Nor does herding people off the dole and into working poverty solve the many social problems—drugs, crime, single parenthood—that make it hard for children born to poor families to fare much better than their parents. For those with deeper problems, like Opal, the promise of rehabilitation and mainstreaming has largely failed to materialize—in part because of the cynicism and bureaucratic inertia of welfare-to-work organizations (despite some passionate casework, which DeParle describes) but also because transforming a troubled life like Opal's is unbelievably hard.

And so the story of welfare reform is ultimately subsumed by a more amorphous tale of poverty and income disparity—problems that resist campaign sloganeering or political quick fixes. How triumphant can we feel about having drastically shrunk the welfare rolls when the Bush tax cuts have shamelessly enriched the small group of wealthiest Americans? As a nation, we continue to act as though the rich were deserving of government help but not the poor, and contrary to prevailing conservative opinion, this is a message the poor have internalized. "What really stands out about Angie and Jewell is how little they felt they were owed," DeParle writes. "When welfare was there for the taking, they got on the bus and took it; when it wasn't, they made other plans. In ending welfare, the country took away their single largest source of income. They didn't lobby or sue. They didn't march or riot. They made their way against the odds into wearying, underpaid jobs. And that does now entitle them to something—to 'a shot at the American Dream' more promising than the one they've received." ■

FILMS

Godard's Inferno

STUART KLAWANS

NOTRE MUSIQUE

Michelangelo and Ulysses came home from the war with knapsacks bulging, bearing the reward for hardships suffered and inflicted. "We promised you the world," the soldiers boasted to their wives. "Here it is"—and onto the kitchen table they spilled a heap of picture postcards.

This scene, from the 1963 *Les Carabiniers*, seems in hindsight the true starting point for Jean-Luc Godard's art. *Breathless* is immortal, *A Woman Is a Woman* continues to delight, *Le Petit Soldat* forever marks Godard as combative and political; but *Les Carabiniers*, among the early films, most clearly announces "the image" as a primary subject of his work.

Not "images," as you might expect from a maker of moving pictures, but "the image." The wildly assorted photographs that Michelangelo and Ulysses slapped down before their wives resembled a primitive travel montage, run so slowly that the frames were visible one by one. This retarding of the flow has become a recurrent device in Godard's late work, starting about fifteen years ago with the series *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. He sometimes makes a point of holding apart the binary elements of filmmaking, shot and reverse shot, rather than letting them merge in the viewer's mind. In place of persistence of vision, he gives you resistance of vision.

In his new film *Notre Musique*—a work of art too tender, sorrowful, gorgeous and profound to be harmed by us critics, with our heavier kind of slowness—Godard demonstrates in person how to pull apart a montage. In a quasi-fictional scene in which he speaks to a small and rather distracted young audience, he holds up a pair of frame enlargements from Howard Hawks's *His Girl Friday*—one of Cary Grant barking into the telephone, the other of Rosalind Russell yakking back—and notes that the two shots, which ostensibly depict warring opposites, are basically identical. ("It proves," he says, "that Hawks didn't know the difference between a man and a woman.") Never mind that this observation, if taken at face value, would be bogus; in *His Girl Friday*, the pictures move and so are not identical at all. But Godard at this moment is not particularly interested in Hawks. He's instructing us in how to read Godard, who thinks in bigger units than most other filmmakers can handle. He treats set-ups, sequences, even whole character arcs as if they were discrete images, to be flashed before you dialectically like shot and reverse shot.

The biggest dialectical opposites in *Notre Musique*, standing symmetrically at either end of the film, are the sequences titled "Hell" and "Heaven." It's the first that reminded me of *Les Carabiniers*, despite the fact that the montage here runs at full speed and beyond. Godard's "Hell" is a staggering ten minutes of found footage, collected from fiction films and documentaries alike and spliced together with a lifetime's skill to show the horrors of war. Flashes of white light; a quick view of celluloid, colorfully decomposing; the booming attack of a piano's bass notes. A woman's voice says, "And so, in the age of fable, there appeared on earth men armed for extermination." They appear: Civil War soldiers from *The Birth of a Nation* running in from the left of the screen, African warriors from *Zulu* rushing back at them from the right, Crusaders, GIs, samurais, guerrillas, an entire battlefield's worth of medieval figures stabbing clumsily at one another. Fire and smoke erupt skyward from bomb blasts, again and again. Naked, skeletal corpses flop down into a ditch. "Forgive us our trespasses," the voice on the soundtrack prays, "as we forgive others—and no differently." Children beg. On a 1940s street kneels a woman (an accused collaborator?) silently pleading before a man in uniform.

If the Michelangelo and Ulysses of *Les Carabiniers* were right—if an image is a real possession—then this initial, infernal section of *Notre Musique* shows us something we own collectively, as heirs of the twentieth century. God knows, we've paid to receive it. Maybe one picture postcard of this "Hell" was shot on the spot, by a newsreel cameraman, and another was concocted on a movie set by Oliver Stone; but as Godard flips through them, these views add up to a single picture, globally produced, which is highly characteristic of our age and amply deserves the name it gets.

What image of "Heaven," then, have we collectively inherited from the age of moving pictures? One that's far more cryptic,

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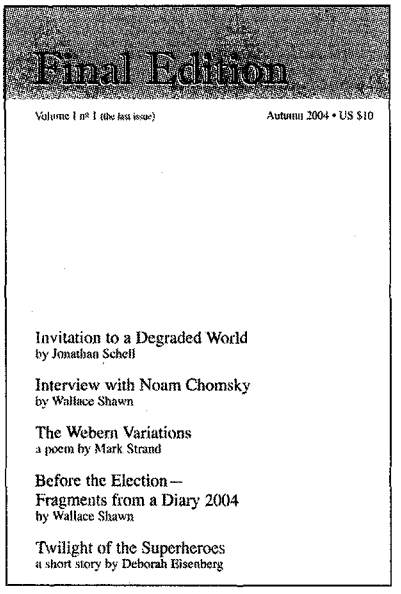
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according to Godard. The closing section of *Notre Musique* is gently paced, in counterpoint to the frenzy of "Hell." The basic technique is the tracking shot, not the montage; the colors are those of nature in its freshness—green forest and blue water—and not in decomposition. Perhaps most important, we are now in the company of one identifiable protagonist, a young woman, who wanders past US Marines (alert but pacific) and frolicking nudes and someone reading a French translation of a novel by David Goodis. Settling down by a lakeside, our new Eve bites into an apple, with no apparent ill effect.

Whereas Godard's "Hell" is an image of something dreadfully familiar, made up of horrors that require no further explanation (and that flash by with the speed of television, as if the remote were in the hand of an angry God), his "Heaven" seems truly alien, since it borrows nothing from the celestial fantasies of popular movies, or from the devotional paintings that have given cinema its white robes and golden harps. The kitsch certainties of a *Green Pastures* would have posed a false opposition to Godard's "Hell." The real counterimage must be undecided, and open to the imagination. The lake you see in "Heaven" surely stretches beyond what's visible at the top of the frame, the new Eve's ramble must somehow go on after the apple is bitten, but Godard quietly refrains from showing how either would continue.

This is the neglected legacy of another type of image-making: the mobile, evocative, observational mode that André Bazin praised in his essays half a century ago, and that is still occasionally practiced today, though not by anybody whose films top the weekend box office. Godard's "Heaven" represents, among other things, an abandoned paradise of long takes and unforced meanings—a paradise that remains accessible to anyone who cares to enter, although it's routinely ignored by advertisers, propagandists and popcorn-sellers.

It is also rejected, to a certain degree, by Godard himself. He may respect the cinema of the steady gaze, but in his own perverse way he is a recidivist of montage, always looking to strike up contrasts between shots, or sequences, or character arcs. Between his "Hell" and "Heaven" falls "Purgatory," by far the longest section of *Notre Musique* and the one that's layered most insistently with doubled images.

Set in Sarajevo during a literary conference—a real one, which Godard has in fact attended—"Purgatory" brings together a variety of actual and invented people to sift through the aftermath of war and perhaps imagine (as Spanish author Juan Goytisolo says amid the rubble) a "creative revolution" of a force comparable to that of the negative revolutions that strike all around. As the section title implies, the characters are in a place of transition, where they may find gestures of reconciliation at every turn: interpreters carrying thoughts from one language into another, an engineer (Gilles Pequeux) reconstructing the Old Bridge at Mostar, a young Israeli journalist (played by Sarah Adler) respectfully interviewing the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish in a Holiday Inn.

Not that reconciliation is achieved. The Israeli journalist also wants to talk with the French ambassador (played by Simon Eine)—to hold "just a conversation" with him, about the Palestinians and Israelis—but he refuses. To speak openly, for him, would be to lose the ability to act. Another young Israeli (played by Nade Dieu)—a near-double of the journalist—trails Godard to his lecture in Sarajevo and makes a video of him. She seems to want to unite the word and the act; but she can't do it and still remain in this world.

If this description of "Purgatory" sounds cryptic, please blame me and not Godard. *Notre Musique* is a direct and heartfelt film, by his standards. As usual, he's quotation-mad; but since the authors of the literary texts are now often present on the screen, reciting their own words, the word soup has thinned out considerably. The characters in "Purgatory" are good company (even grizzled old Jean-Luc himself),

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and the tone is light enough that an impromptu dance can break out at a diplomatic reception. For the people with whom I've discussed *Notre Musique*, only one element seems to weigh down the film: the Indians (George Aguilar and Leticia Gutiérrez). What the hell are they doing in Sarajevo?

Being outsiders, that's what. The Native Americans stick out in *Notre Musique* as bizarre and inexplicable presences—but that's appropriate, since they literally have no place in the discussion. Although they are inextricably bound up with Europeans through their history (much as Palestinians are bound up with Jews), the Indians are shut out, by definition, from something called "European Literary Encounters."

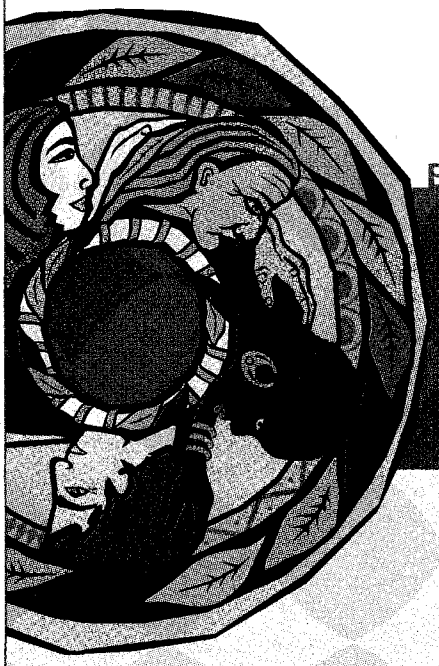
The problem that Godard poses here, as I understand it, is one of recognition. He knows that movie audiences—that is, most people in the developed world—have seldom truly seen an Indian. Instead, they have looked at Wild West projections: images that mirrored their Euro-American authors, as Rosalind Russell mirrors Cary Grant in *His Girl Friday*, and so set up a false opposition, rather than a real dialogue. In much the same way, Palestinians are made into the false mirror image of Jews. ("The world isn't interested in me," Mahmoud Darwish tells his interviewer. "It notices me only because it is interested in you.") The great trial of this "Purgatory," then, is to recognize the other person and not just oneself; to discover a shot and reverse shot that are truly different; to locate the opposite riverbank so we can begin rebuilding the bridge.

Godard tells us nothing new, in other words. Nothing that we can afford to ignore, either, even for one more day.

So I come back at last to Ulysses and Michelangelo—characters who, in Godard's account, always come back anyway. One of them survived battles and monsters and brought home a tale to tell. The other (to quote his sonnet) lived in hell and painted its picture. We know very well what these two characters have to show us of the world; it's our legacy, which we have no good reason to disown.

But if we could slow down the torrent of images—perhaps just by shutting our eyes and thinking for a moment—what new thing might we discover in the gap between the pictures? Godard, though stuck in purgatory, bets there's something more to see in that darkness. And even though Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is entirely absent from this film (a striking omission, given Godard's lifelong love for his work), there also might be something new out there to hear, a sound we ought to recognize but don't.

Our music. ■



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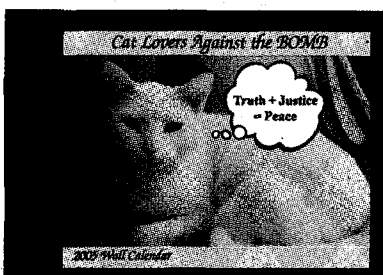

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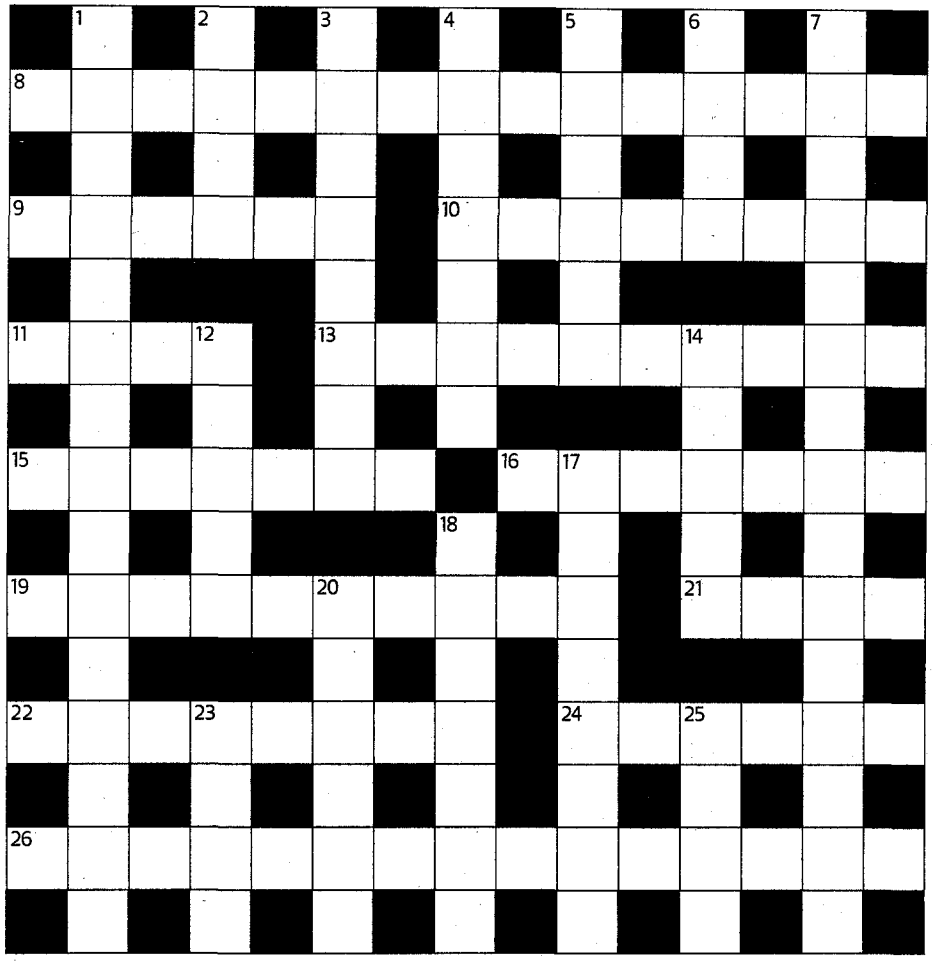
PUZZLE NO. 2967

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

8 It shouldn't mean what you owe is exceptional, however! (11,4)

9 Call into question the sort of popgun you find here? (6)

10 What one is told to keep shouldn't imply you have nothing to write, and just follow instructions. (4,4)

11 and **20** down Not caches of the hard stuff—just places to get such as an aspirin. (4,6)

13 Something to clean up with is found around one that lubricates things in the heating plant. (6,4)

15 Get rid of that devilish attitude! (7)

16 What they wear at the musical junction? (A Sox duet is involved.) (7)

19 They're the ones who start things! (10)

21 Possibly seem to be like the youngster's literary Captain, if he knows Peter? (4)

22 Good things are not supposed to come out of it, but lots of carvers do it. (8)

24 It's not logical to say this dessert can't be beaten—especially by the French. (6)

26 You and I, at the girl's word of warning, end up with stage performers, which we hope will be nice and pleasant. (7,8)

DOWN

1 Not the main parts of what you have to eat with wine, or single out the letters finally. (10,5)

2 You can surely find a use for one in the Good Book… (4)

3 …where you will see a companion of Paul and Mark catch transportation to the farm building. (8)

4 A former dictator who shows what pertains to the ear is pretty dumb? (7)

6 and **5** First person, male and female. (4,3,3)

7 With an elastic around a person's mail, one in the army should never do it. (7,4,4)

12 For a sort of pager, one is open-mouthed! (5)

14 Takes care of the sails, in order not to run onto these? (5)

17 Isn't that just like a bear! (8)

18 Shed what is also good, coming up with a very strong finish. (4,3)

20 See 11 across

23 If one does his, one shouldn't 7 down. (4)

25 Moves on a curve, causing the cars to get wrecked. (4)

PUZZLED? No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules" send for those of Mr. Lewis to: Puzzled, The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, or access our website at www.thenation.com/about/crossword.mhtml.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2966

R	I	S	I	B	L	E	■	R	O	M	A	N	C	E
E	■	L	■	L	■	N	■	E	■	O	■	E	■	M
P	R	O	S	A	I	C	■	M	A	T	I	S	S	E
U	■	G	■	C	■	H	■	O	■	I	■	T	■	N
T	R	A	C	K	■	A	N	D	■	F	I	E	L	D
E	■	N	■	■	■	I	■	E	■	■	■	G	■	E
D	I	S	D	A	I	N	■	L	O	U	N	G	E	D
■	■	■	■	N	■	■	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	■
W	O	U	N	D	E	D	■	E	L	E	G	I	E	S
A	■	B	■	■	■	R	■	L	■	■	■	N	■	L
S	T	A	N	D	■	O	F	F	■	W	H	I	T	E
S	■	N	■	A	■	V	■	L	■	I	■	T	■	I
A	R	G	O	N	N	E	■	O	N	G	O	I	N	G
I	■	I	■	S	■	R	■	C	■	H	■	A	■	H
L	I	S	T	E	N	S	■	K	E	T	T	L	E	S

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*Source: "Lighting the Way to Energy Savings"; 1999

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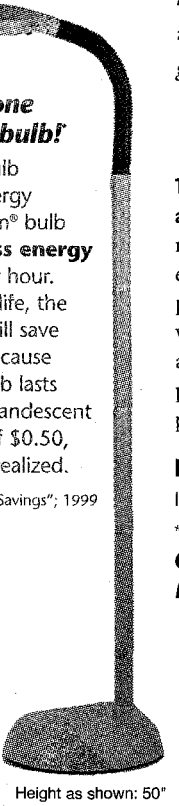
Its 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent to a 150-watt ordinary light bulb. This makes it perfect for activities such as reading, writing, sewing, needlepoint, and especially for aging eyes.

We've looked at lots of lights, but this one offered the benefit of dual light levels of 27 and 18 watts of power equivalent to 150 and 100-watt incandescent bulbs. This lamp has a flexible gooseneck design for maximum efficiency, with an "Instant On" switch that is flicker-free. The high-tech electronics, user-friendly design, and bulb that lasts ten times longer than an ordinary bulb make this product a must-have.



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Grace A.
Margate, FL

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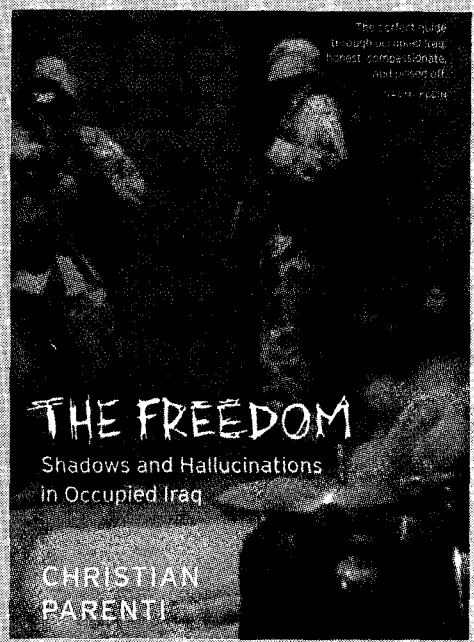

"AH, THE FREEDOM. LOOK, WE HAVE THE GAS-LINE FREEDOM, THE LOOTING FREEDOM, THE KILLING FREEDOM, THE RAPE FREEDOM, THE HASH-SMOKING FREEDOM. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THIS FREEDOM." –AKEEL, A 26-YEAR-OLD BAGHDAD RESIDENT, ON LIFE IN THE NEW IRAQ *THE FREEDOM: SHADOWS AND HALLUCINATIONS IN OCCUPIED IRAQ* BY CHRISTIAN PARENTI "BRILLIANTLY VIVID." –*THE NATION* "IT'S A GRIM STORY, AND IT FEELS REAL." –*PUBLISHERS WEEKLY* "THE PERFECT GUIDE THROUGH OCCUPIED IRAQ: HONEST, COMPASSIONATE, AND PISSED-OFF." –NAOMI KLEIN

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